NICK CARTER STORIES

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THE TERRIBLE GAME OF MILLIONS;

Or, TRACKING DOWN THE PLOTTERS.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

A MILLIONAIRE'S PROBLEM.

"MR. CARTER: I want you again, and I want you right away. Can you take dinner with me at my house at seven o'clock this evening? Answer. Yours truly,

"JARED LOGAN."

Nick Carter closed the note together, returned it to the envelope, and, turning to the messenger, said:

"Tell him that he may expect me to dine with him to-night."

The great mansion in which Jared Logan, capitalist, financier, money king, and magnate, lived, was located on Fifth Avenue above Fifty-ninth Street, and at ten minutes before seven o'clock that evening the great detective was admitted to the trust-maker's library, where he found that gentleman awaiting him.

"On time, as always, I see," said Mr. Logan, rising and extending his hand. "Dinner will be announced at once, and as we will dine alone and undisturbed, we will discuss the business matter on which I have summoned you, at that time. Now, first tell me, how are you? How have you been since we fixed up that little matter of the bonds?"

"Never better," replied Nick, smiling.

"And the inspector? How is he?"

"I haven't seen him since the day following our parting in this room, but it is safe to assume that he is as fine as the rest of us."

"I hope so. It doesn't seem as if an entire month had elapsed since you sent out and had the criminals, who had robbed me, brought to this room instead of going after them as anybody else would have been obliged to do—does it?"

"No, it really does not."

"I was surprised when I looked up the date this afternoon, to find that it was just a month, to a day. Still, a month is little enough time for Daniel J. Dean to begin to make his claws felt."

"Ah!" said Nick. "So it is Dean who is the cause of your sending for me to-day?"

"You bet it is," said Mr. Logan, with emphasis. "Very much Dean, very much, indeed."

"What has he been doing now?"

Before a reply could be made to the detective's question, dinner was announced, and the conversation was not resumed until the dinner was well under way, and the servant had been bidden to retire, and to remain outside until called for.

"Now, Carter," said the rich man, "I think we may venture to reopen the subject which interests us both."

"At your service," responded Nick.

"You know—or if you do not know, you can readily understand why—old Dean has had it in for me in a thousand and one different ways ever since that affair of the bonds."

"I had supposed he would. In fact, I was not surprised when your summons came to me to-day. The only surprise connected with its receipt, was that it did not come much sooner."

"I don't doubt it. Perhaps it is almost a wonder that he has not had me murdered before this."

"Hardly that," said Nick, with a smile.

The magnate leaned forward across the table, and said, with slow emphasis:

"And yet, my dear Carter, that is exactly the game he is playing."

Nick Carter's smile instantly changed to a frown.

"Do you mean to say that Daniel J. Dean, who is almost a billionaire, who is a prominent church member, leader of Bible classes galore, and generally a respected man, would stoop to such a low and common method of revenge as that?" he asked.

"Well," replied Mr. Logan, "it is quite certain that

somebody has tried to kill me. I am not prepared to say that Dean did it, but I'll give you the field against him, and lay you a hundred to one, in any amount you please, that if he should step into the Palace of Truth, and should happen to be asked the question while he was there, he would come pretty close to giving a lucid explanation."

"Humph!" said Nick.

"Exactly," responded Logan. "That is what I've been saying right along. In fact, it is about all I could say, so I decided to send for you."

"You think, then, that without a doubt Dean hates you cordially, and that nothing short of your death will satisfy him?"

"You have about expressed my idea of the situation," replied Mr. Logan.

"I supposed it was the practice of men such as he, when they happened to hate anybody, to break them. To reduce their enemies to poverty. To send them to the wall," said Nick.

"So it is—as a rule, but that would not suffice in this case."

"Why not in this case as much as any other?"

"Because I know too much."

"About what?"

"Need you ask?"

"I often ask questions when I already know the answer. If you were in my business, you would know why."

"Perhaps I know, anyhow."

"Well, then—about what?"

"About that bond business. You don't for an instant suppose that there has been an hour of any day since that happened when he has not thought about it, and wondered how the whole thing came about as it did, do you?"

"No; on the contrary, I happen to know that your surmise is correct."

"Indeed! How so?"

"Because I have taken the trouble to keep him rather well shadowed ever since the day when we outwitted him so nicely."

"Good. I had an idea that you would do that very thing. I wish you would tell me about it."

"Later. When we get to it."

"Well; to return; don't you see the point?"

"Perfectly well; just the same, I wish to hear your view of it."

"Suppose, in that case, I put it this way: Five Wall Street men, of which I am one, seek to combine the capitals of several large companies into one, and so to organize what the world popularly calls a trust.

"I have certain views respecting that organization which Dean combats, but I am the real organizer in the transaction, and by delicate maneuvering I succeed in inducing a majority of the parties concerned to think my way, and I have the thing all but ready when my private vault is blown open and all the bonds which are to be needed in completing that transaction are stolen, so that I will not be able to produce them at the crucial moment—in short, so that one man in that party—Dean—can make it appear that I am purposely withholding the bonds. That is what happened, isn't it?"

"Partly. Go on."

"That is what would have happened if you and your friend, the inspector of police, had not prevented it. Now, Dean believed that those bonds had been stolen and——"

"He knew they had been, since he stole them himself."

"Exactly. He knew that they had been stolen. He believed them to be in the possession of his agent when he attended that meeting. At least, he was positive in his own mind that I could not produce them."

"Correct."

"He even went to the extent of making a speech to that effect before the bonds were asked for—a speech in which he all but called me a thief. All the same, when the bonds were called for, I opened a safe that stood at my elbow, and—I produced the bonds."

"Whereat old Dean very promptly fainted away from excess of emotion, eh?"

"Or fright, yes. And then, he had to give way. He was forced to let me control that meeting and to arrange the details as I pleased. You don't know how that hurt him."

"I can imagine."

"Well, now, look here, Carter. According to the knowledge you succeeded in obtaining about that robbery, things were about this way when I unexpectedly produced the bonds: The last time Dean had seen that room, forty-eight hours earlier, it was a wreck. The three safes in it had been blown or burned to pieces; when he entered it that evening everything was in seeming order. When he called for the bonds, they were ready, while all the time he supposed them to be locked in a safe belonging to an architect named Morrison, at the Finance and Credit Company's Bank. It wasn't disappointment which made him faint away, it was fright."

"Perhaps."

"And when he recovered from the fainting spell, he had to be taken home at once, because he was too ill to remain; and when he went away he left the whole thing in my hands. You were there, and you know. He gave me his verbal proxy in the presence of all the others, and sent me the written one to put on file, the next day."

"Well! Then what?"

"Why, then he began to wonder how in blazes those bonds got back into my safe."

"Sure thing," said Nick, laughing.

"And the more he wondered about it, the less able he was to account for it."

"That's another sure thing, too."

"And he's wondering yet," said the Wall Street magnate, with a grin.

"Sure thing number three," was Nick Carter's comment.

"Now, it never has occurred to him that the Nicholas Carter, whose name was added to the list of our directors that night, and who sat at the table with us, was you, and—there is the point: He gives me credit for ten thousand times more wit than I've got."

"How so?"

"Why, he has figured it out about this way: He thinks that I had sense enough to light upon the architect and the contractors at once, as being the really guilty parties, and he probably thinks that I either intimidated them into telling me the entire story, or that I bought them. He knows that Morrison had the bonds, he knows that I got them back again, ergo, he knows that I got them from Morrison."

"Well?"

"Well, he knows, therefore, that I know him to be a thief and a burglar, and he thinks that I am only biding

my time, to put the screws onto him in a way that will make him squeal worse than a stuck pig."

"Which I have no doubt you have all along fully intended to do, when the time comes," said Nick.

"I'll admit it; but what of it? Men who are interested in the game we are playing—the game that is called millions, resort to every expedient in their power to win at the game. That affair of the bonds proves that. Dean knows that some day there will arise a circumstance when I will feel it necessary to force him to think as I do upon some deal that may come up.

"He knows that such a situation might mean the gain to me and the loss to him of several million dollars, but he knows another thing which is of more importance than that. He knows that when I decided to do such a thing, it would mean that he had met his master, and that he would be obliged to acknowledge defeat. That is where the shoe pinches."

"Just the mere fact that he knows himself to be in your power."

"Just that."

"Well?"

"There is only one way in all the world for him to escape from the consequences of it."

"Good! What is that?"

"By acting in the capacity of pallbearer at my funeral, for there is no doubt that he would be asked to serve if I should happen to die. But that isn't all, Carter, not by a long shot."

"No? What more?"

"He has, I believe, already gotten rid of the other three, the architect and the two contractors."

"What makes you think that?" asked Nick, more interested than he permitted to appear.

"This: We know where they went when they left this house, we know that they were to be detained at police headquarters until after that meeting when I produced the bonds, we know that they sent word to their families that they would be absent two or three days, we know that they were released about sixty hours later, but we did not know—and I did not know it until to-day—that not one of the three, Morrison, Forbes, or Robertson, has been seen since their release. They have disappeared."

CHAPTER II.

A BOMB, A PISTOL, AND POISONED CANDY.

"This is getting interesting," said Nick, settling back in his chair. "Suppose you tell me how you know about it, Mr. Logan?"

"I know about it because the wife of each one of those three men has written to me for information," answered the banker.

"How is that?"

"It seems that in the letters they sent to their homes, in which they explained that they would be absent two or three days, each one of them mentioned my name—mentioned my affairs as the cause of their detention."

"Which was true."

"Of course. Well, to-day, I received three letters—one from each one of those women."

"Go on."

"The letters are at my office, but the substance of them was the same. They told of the fact that their husbands had informed them by letter that they would be away from home two or three days, on business for Mr. Logan, and that since the receipt of those letters they had not heard a word from any of them. There you are. Those women believed that I could supply the address of their husbands—and, by thunder, I believe I could."

"What do you mean by that?"

"That they are dead."

"Bosh!"

"And that old Dean is the cause of their not returning to their homes."

"That sounds more reasonable. What answer did you send to the ladies?"

"I sent word that I knew nothing about their husbands, that they had no business to attend to for me, and that there must be some mistake about their surmises. Good Heaven, Carter, I don't want to be mixed up in that business."

"Naturally not."

"But I do want to do the next best thing for those three women."

"What is that?"

"I want you to find out what became of their husbands. You are not above doing that, are you, since you became a millionaire?"

"I have been a millionaire for several years, Mr. Logan," was the detective's rejoinder.

"Good. That's the answer I believed you would make, and I am glad to hear you make it."

"It seems to me," said Nick, "that we are forgetting the principal topic of this interview."

"What was that? I have forgotten."

"Your own danger. You said that efforts had already been made to kill you."

"Well, it's true."

"What sort of efforts?"

"Just the ordinary sort, I expect. Bombs, poisoned candy, and pistols."

"Explain what you mean."

"That is easily done. Night before last, when I took my accustomed canter through the park, and I remained out later than usual. In returning, I came through the Seventy-second Street gate into Fifth Avenue. Before you get to that gate, the bridle path leads through a bit of woods—a sort of ravine. Come back into the library now—we'll have our coffee there—and I will show you the hat I wore on that occasion."

"What about the hat?"

"It has got a bullet hole through the crown of it which was not there when I started on my return from my ride."

"I see. Fired at you from the bushes?"

"From somewhere. I didn't wait to see exactly where the bullet came from. It was sufficient for me to know that it came from a pistol and that the pistol was aimed at me. I hurried home."

"And you pursued your usual method of silence, I suppose, and told nobody of the occurrence."

"I haven't mentioned it until now; neither have I ridden in the park since then."

"I suppose not. Now, what about the other things?" asked the detective.

"The bomb and the candy?"

"Yes."

"The candy came last night. It was here when I got home. Everybody who knows me, knows that I am

very fond of candy. I eat as much of it, or more, than a schoolgirl. It is my favorite dissipation."

"Well?"

"All the same I don't happen to know about anybody who has ever taken the trouble to send candy to me. I suppose they have thought quite generally that I was able to buy my own."

"No doubt."

"But I didn't think of that when I opened the box of candy. I put it on the table right here, and broke the wrappings. The candy looked fine—luscious. I smacked my lips in anticipation, while I lifted a piece of it to my mouth. In another minute I would have been as dead as a herring, only that I happened to lift my eyes at that instant, and they lighted upon the bullet hole in that hat. It was also on the table, and close beside the candy."

"Well?"

"I saw through that hole, and I saw through a great big millstone at the same time. I put the candy back into the box, untasted, and after that I did a mighty mean thing, but I guess you will think it was excusable under the circumstances."

"What did you do?"

"I don't like to poison an animal any better than a girl would, but I had to know about that candy. There was a stray dog that had been yelping around the street here for two or three days, and I happened to hear him outside at that moment. I went to the door and called the dog to me. I gave him two pieces of the candy. Carter, that dog was dead before he had time to touch the second piece."

"Cyanide of potassium," said Nick.

"Probably. I dragged the dog down to the gutter and left him there. Then I picked up the second piece of candy, returned it to the box, and locked the box in one of my safes."

"And, as in the case of the pistol shot, said nothing about it, I suppose."

"I have not mentioned it till now."

"What about the bomb?"

"That came to-day."

"To-day!"

"Yes."

"It was here when you arrived home this evening?" asked Nick.

"Yes."

"You weren't expecting it when you wrote me that letter, were you?"

"Not particularly."

"What have you done with it?"

"It is here, that is, it is in my strong room, waiting for you to open it—if you care to do so."

"What is it?"

"You can search me, Mr. Carter. All that I know about it is that I was not expecting a package of any sort."

"So you have not even taken off the wrapper?"

"I haven't touched it save to carry it into the strong room, and leave it there."

"I don't know that I blame you for your caution."

"I'm getting wise. If a bullet hole through my hat, while that hat is on my head, and a package of candy stuffed with cyanide of potassium, isn't sufficient to put one wise—— Well, that's the story."

"We'll soak the package later, and then examine it," said Nick.

"You can examine it, Carter, if you care to do so; as for me, I haven't a particle of curiosity on the subject," said Mr. Logan significantly.

"I suppose these occurrences have made you nervous, haven't they?"

"Nervous? Well, not exactly that. I haven't many nerves left, I think; but I know this much."

"What is that?"

"If you don't find a way to prevent it, old Dean will carry his point, and I will be a dead man inside of a week. That's all."

CHAPTER III.

DELICATE WORK FOR CHICK AND PATSY.

"I suppose you are perfectly satisfied in your own mind that Daniel J. Dean is responsible for all these circumstances?"

"Aren't you?"

"I was asking you that question."

"As for me—I am more than satisfied, I am absolutely convinced."

"And yet it is doubtful if there will ever be a way to find proof of such a thing."

"Why? Because you think Dean would cover up his tracks so thoroughly that there will be no chance of proving anything against him?"

"Yes."

"He tried that dodge once before, and failed."

"All the more reason why he should exhibit more caution in the future."

"Perhaps so. All the same, I am very sure, Nick, that you will catch him."

"I am afraid that that remark is due more to your confidence in me than to your doubts of Dean's perspicacity."

"Perhaps it is. It is, nevertheless, my belief."

"Well, we will see what can be done."

"You bet we will. And now, in the meantime——"

"Well?"

"What do you recommend that I should do?"

"How do you mean?"

"Well, I am more or less tenacious of life. I'm not hankering after the unknowable to any very great extent. I don't think that I am prepared to die—at least, not yet," said Mr. Logan grimly.

"Oh, I see!"

"Shall I hunt the woods? Go off on a search for a cyclone cellar? Buy a bombproof residence down at one of the forts, or only go away back and sit down?"

"I should not recommend any one of those remedies," said Nick, with a smile.

"No? What would you recommend?"

"Nothing at all."

"What? Do you want me to step out into the open and invite the accumulated assassins to shoot?"

"Just that."

"Looks like rather a foolhardy proceeding, doesn't it?" asked Mr. Logan.

"Not at all."

"Perhaps you will tell me why not?"

"Well, I have never kept an exact count, but I have reason to believe that my life has been sworn away five

or six hundred times; and I have never yet found time to dodge the people who have done it."

"Yes, but——"

"Your case amounts to the same thing. True, you are not as accustomed to danger as I am, and, perhaps, you would not be as quick to avoid it; all the same, I would not dodge, and I would not let Dean—if it is Dean—or anybody else suppose that I gave his efforts to put me out of the way a second thought."

"All right. You're the doctor. I am going to take your advice in this matter, and do just what you tell me to."

"Go about your affairs just as if nothing had happened at all to disturb the serenity of your habits."

"I see."

"I should not recommend that you ride in the park after dark, or, in fact, at all, for a little while; and I think that until I have worked on this thing a little, and therefore am better prepared to advise, you would do well to be as busy as possible."

"What do you mean by that? I am always as busy as possible."

"True enough; and yet you find time to do a lot of things that are not done in your diary of engagements."

"Sure thing. I'd die if I did not."

"Cut out the few things that are likely to take you into unexpected dangers, like riding in the park, and such things."

"You mean for me to keep as much as possible between my office and here."

"Yes."

"But how am I to know what is happening at my office while I am here? And how am I to know what is happening here while I am at my office?"

"I will attend to that."

"How?"

"I will send Chick Carter, my first assistant, to you in the morning."

"Good!"

"I will send him to the office. I want you to install him at once as an extra secretary inside your private office, and to find an excuse to put your present secretary outside."

"What do you mean? Discharge him?"

"By no means. Simply move his desk into another room. Send for him when you want him, but do not go to him at all."

"And keep—what's his name?—Chick—in the office with me?" questioned Mr. Logan.

"Always. Every minute of the time."

"But there are men who want to talk to me privately——"

"Let them wait, then, until this thing is over. Don't let anybody force Chick for one moment out of your sight."

"All right. That goes."

"Ride in an automobile which I will provide for you ——"

"What's the matter with my own?"

"——which I will provide for you, between your office and your house, and take Chick with you always. Treat him as a private secretary, and use him as one, too, if you wish; he is quite equal to it."

"Anything more?"

"Yes, I will send Patsy here to the house."

"Another assistant?"

"Yes; give him a chair at this desk, here in the library. Tell the butler to inform the servants that he is your new confidential secretary, and that he is to have the run of the entire house."

"Good."

"Give the order that he is to see everybody who comes to see you, add that he is to see them first; that he is to receive, personally, every letter or package which comes for you, and do not you touch anything unless he has first examined it."

"You would rather have him blown up than me, eh?"

"He won't be blown up and you might."

"I see."

"Chick will turn you over to Patsy in the evening, and Patsy will turn you over to Chick in the morning. I will hold them both responsible for your well being. I'll guarantee that Mr. Dean, or anybody else, will have to be mighty slick if they get ahead of those two young detectives."

"Good! And I will feel as safe as a church."

"And you may. Only there is a part of this arrangement which you must fulfill, also."

"What is that?"

"You must not permit yourself to be called out, without first informing either one of my assistants who happens to be with you at the time."

"Rule one. Go on."

"You must not receive a letter or a package which has not first been in the hands of one of them."

"Rule two. Go on."

"You must not see or talk to any person who has not first been inspected by one of them."

"Rule three. Any more?"

Nick smiled.

"There are three hundred others," he said, "but your own good sense will tell you what they are, for they are all very much like one, two, and three. Do you think you can remember them?"

"You bet I can."

"And live up to them?"

"Yes."

"In that case I think that I can promise you immunity," said Nick confidently.

"And what are you going to be doing all this time? You seem to have left all the work to your assistants."

"Does look a little that way, doesn't it? Well, you can figure on my keeping busy. I'll be sitting up and looking around most of the time."

"That is what I supposed. Now, that disposes of my case. What do you intend to do about Morrison, the architect, and Forbes and Robertson, the contractors, who have disappeared so mysteriously?"

"I think I will look into their cases a little. In fact, that is the direct road in this matter."

"You agree with me, then, that Dean is doubtless behind their disappearance."

"Yes, I think I do; but I will tell you more about that the next time we discuss the matter."

"When will that be?"

"As soon as there is anything to discuss."

"To-morrow night?"

"Perhaps. I'll see."

"Then I will find Chick Carter at the office to-morrow morning?"

"No. You will find him here. I will send him here

to go to the office with you; also the automobile that is to take you there."

"And Patsy, the other one?"

"I will telephone for him to come here now, so that I will give him his instructions in your presence. If Dean gets in his work on you, it won't be without the knowledge of one of my assistants or myself; you can bank on that."

The magnate heaved a great sigh.

"One thing is certain," he said; "you have made me feel a hundred per cent better. I can sleep to-night without expecting that my bed will be blown up before I get out of it."

CHAPTER IV.

EXACTLY SIXTY HOURS.

At ten o'clock the following morning, Nick Carter was in consultation with his friend, the inspector in charge of the detective bureau at his office at police headquarters.

"That is the story," he said, in conclusion. "Now, when we closed that old affair of the bonds, Morrison, the architect, came here to headquarters with you, didn't he?"

"He certainly did."

"And Forbes and Robertson arrived in charge of some of your men, a little later?"

"About an hour later, I should say."

"You locked them up, of course?"

"Certainly."

"And kept them here till when?

"Well, it was approximately ten o'clock in the evening when the keys were turned on them?"

"I should say about that."

"They were released at ten o'clock of the third morning after that?

"So they were here in your custody, exactly sixty hours?"

"Exactly sixty hours."

"Have you any idea what became of them after that, inspector?"

"None whatever. It wasn't up to me to keep tabs on them after that time."

"Certainly not. Did you see them or any of them when they were released?"

"No."

"Will you call the man here who did?"

The inspector rang the bell, and ordered that Donovan be sent to the room at once.

"You are Donovan?" asked Nick, when he appeared.

"I am, sir."

"You remember Morrison, and Forbes and Robertson, who were here a month ago, and who were in your custody about sixty hours?"

"I do, sir."

"You released them when they went away?"

"I did, sir."

"Did you hear any one of them express any sentiment at all which would give you an idea of where he or any of them intended to go?"

"Only one—Morrison. The others were as silent as mud turtles."

"What did Morrison have to say?"

"He said, 'Well, here's for home,' when he went out of the door. That's all."

"How did they conduct themselves while they were here, Donovan?"

"Morrison cried most of the time. Forbes swore most of the time, and Robertson—he just looked sulky. I don't think I heard the sound of his voice."

"So you could not give an opinion regarding the intention of any of the three when they left your custody?"

"I could not, sir."

"That will do, Donovan; thank you."

Nick turned again to the inspector when Donovan had left the room.

"It is reasonably certain that they did not arrive at their homes whether they started for there or not," he said. "True, I have not inquired of their families as yet; I shall do that at once, but it is not supposable that they went there, else why were the letters sent to Logan?"

"Possibly for a blind," remarked the inspector.

"I have thought of that."

"The unanimity of the letters——"

"And that also. The fact that the letters arrived at the same time might appear as if there were collusion among the three wives in writing about their respective husbands," suggested Nick significantly.

"It's worth looking into, at least."

"It is possible," said Nick, "that while they were here, being in the same boat, so to speak, they may have cooked up a plan between them, for future action. Of course, they were not permitted to send out any notes?"

"Certainly not."

"Then if they did go home after they left here, their plans were laid after that."

"Sure."

"I'll take a run up to their houses."

"Good. Will you let me know about it, Nick?"

"Yes. I'll communicate with you at once, of course," said Nick.

"Do you want any help in this matter? Do you want any of my men detailed on the case with you?"

"No, thank you. Not at the present moment. If I do, I will not hesitate to ask for one."

"All right."

Half an hour later Nick was seated in the parlor of the residence of Philander Morrison, and in a few minutes after he entered it, Mrs. Morrison made her appearance.

"I have called," said Nick, "at the suggestion of Mr. Jared Logan, who has been greatly disturbed by the letter he received from you. He wished me to say to you that it is true that he called Mr. Morrison in consultation with him, at the time you say he disappeared, but he has not seen him since. At the same time, if there is any way in which he can be of service in assisting you in the matter, his best efforts are at your disposal."

The detective could tell at a glance that the woman had suffered. He realized, the instant he saw her, that she was no party to her husband's disappearance, and he had made the long announcement he did, in order to give her time to collect herself as soon as she knew the purpose of his call.

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed. "You do not think that my husband is——"

"Madam, I cannot form an opinion about the case until I know about it," interrupted the detective. "Suppose we begin at the right place."

"Yes, sir."

"When was it that you saw your husband last?"

"It was on the evening of the fifteenth. He was reading in the library. I was entertaining some guests in the parlor."

"Well? And what happened then?"

"Some one came to the door, and my husband was called out on the steps. He was there five, or, perhaps, ten minutes, when he returned and came directly to me."

"And then——"

"I noticed, or thought I did, that he was excited. He said he was called out on urgent business."

"Did you ask him where?"

"Yes, he said to the house of Jared Logan. He thought he would not be gone more than an hour or two. I have not seen him since then."

"But you heard from him after that?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"About eleven or twelve o'clock that night."

"He sent a note to you?"

"Yes, by a messenger boy."

"What did he say in the letter?"

"He said that he was called out of town on business for Mr. Logan, and that he might be absent two or three days, and for me not to worry."

"Have you heard from him since that time?"

"Not a word."

"And that was a month and two days ago, for to-day is the seventeenth."

"Yes, sir."

"Did you keep the letter he sent to you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you get it and let me see it?"

"Gladly, sir, although I have told you almost everything that was in it."

"Nevertheless, I would like to see it. By the way, before you go after the note, have you a personal acquaintance with Mrs. Forbes or Mrs. Robertson?"

"Merely an acquaintance, that is all. I had never seen either of them but once or twice until this terrible thing happened."

"And have you seen them often since that time?"

"I see them, or talk with them over the telephone, every day now. We compare notes at the close of every day. Though we have been only able to try and comfort each other."

"Are their stories in effect the same as yours?"

"Precisely. There is no difference."

"Are they particular friends of each other? That is, were they so before this happened, do you think?"

"They are sisters, sir."

"Ah! Indeed! And they live in adjoining houses, do they not?"

"Yes."

"Now, if you will let me see that letter——"

It was placed in the detective's hands a moment later, but it told him nothing more than he had already gleaned, and, as he gave it back to her, he said:

"Madam, I wish that I could assure you that your husband is safe, but I can only say that I believe he is."

"Oh, thank you for those words of hope," said the woman, her face lighting up.

"It is a great trial for you to face," said the detective kindly, "but if you will have courage, I am confident that it will turn out all right."

"But where can my husband be, all this time? I am sure that something must have happened to him, or he would at least have sent me word."

"Would you like me to tell you what I think has happened?"

"Oh, yes, sir, indeed I would."

"Remember, it is only an opinion, but—do you happen to know Mr. Dean? Daniel J. Dean?"

"Of course, I know who he is, but I do not know him to speak to, only by sight."

"Do you know that your husband has had business dealings with him of late?"

"Yes, I know that."

"Very well, madam, it is possible—only possible, mind you, that Mr. Dean may know something about him."

"Why! How could that be, sir?"

"I will tell you, and then, if you follow my suggestions, we will soon know whether my surmise is correct or not. But I must ask you to keep entirely secret whatever I suggest."

CHAPTER V.

THE MAN ACROSS THE STREET.

An idea had suddenly occurred to Nick Carter, through which he saw his way clear to get at Daniel J. Dean without trouble or delay.

Ever since his talk with Mr. Logan the preceding evening, he had cudgeled his brains for an excuse to approach the great Crœsus—the great king of finance, and here, in the presence of this suffering woman, he saw his opportunity.

But he realized that he would be compelled to admit her, to a certain extent, to his confidence—that he must make her, in part, at least, a confederate; and this he resolved to do at once.

The short time he had been with her had been sufficient for him to determine that she was a woman of extraordinary character, capable of really great things if only the necessity for them should arise, and, surely, the necessity was present now.

"Mrs. Morrison," he said, "do you think you could play a part, and, not only that, assist me to play another?" questioned the detective earnestly.

"I don't understand you," she replied.

"I am a detective; perhaps you may have heard of me. I am Nick Carter."

"Indeed, I have heard of you, Mr. Carter. Oh, I am so glad that you are here. If you will help me to find my husband, I shall feel comforted at once."

"I will help you to find him, and I will find him—if he is to be found."

"Then tell me what you wish me to do."

"And if I do so, will you agree to do it without question and without argument?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, then; that is a bargain."

"It is, sir."

"Then I must begin by taking you more or less into my confidence."

"Yes, sir. Your confidence will not be betrayed, I can promise you."

"I feel assured of that. You have said that you are aware of the fact that of late your husband has had some business dealings with old Dean."

"Yes, sir."

"Very well; now I happen to know that in connection with that business your husband became possessed of certain knowledge that was dangerous."

"Dangerous, sir?"

"Yes; that is the word. Dangerous because it was knowledge which Dean did not care to be in the possession of any living man but himself."

"Then you think that he has had my husband murdered?" cried Mrs. Morrison.

"Tut! Not so fast as that."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I mean that in order to feel assured that this knowledge would not be given to another, for a time at least, it is possible that Dean may have spirited your husband, and also his associates, the contractors, away for a time," answered Nick.

"I begin to understand. You do not mean that he would dare to have them killed, but that he might dare to hold them prisoners somewhere, for a time."

"Exactly that."

Her lips tightened over her teeth, and she was silent for a moment. Then she said:

"Tell me what to do, and I will do it."

"Mind," said Nick, "I do not know that this is so. I only surmise that it may be so."

"I understand."

"If it is so, there is one way in which I think we may be able to discover the truth."

"What is that?"

"I would like you to take me with you to call upon Mr. Dean."

"You would like me to take you to call—really, is that not rather transposing the condition?"

"No, I mean literally what I say. I wish to get to the presence of Dean. I cannot think of a way to accomplish it without putting him 'wise,' as a street boy would express the idea.

"It is quite natural that you should go to him on some pretext," continued the detective, "and, if I know the man at all, I think there is not a doubt that he will see you."

"Very well."

"We will go to his house—not to his office. We will go there this evening."

"Yes."

"I will come here after you at eight o'clock—no, at seven—and I will be disguised so that you will not know me, but"—he took a card from his pocket, tore it in half, and gave one portion to her—"I will hand you this half of that card, so that you will know there is no mistake."

"Yes, but——"

"We will go then to call upon Mr. Dean. You will send in your card and he will receive you. I will be with you. You will introduce me as your brother."

"But I have no brother."

"Never mind that. He doesn't know if you have a dozen. You will say that I am from out of town—wherever you please—and that I have come here to assist you in your trouble."

"And then——"

"Say to Dean that the last word you received from your husband was to the effect that he was going to see Dean, that he had business of the utmost importance with him, that he did not know how long he might be detained, but not above an hour or two; that he was afraid that unless he saw Dean at once, Dean would come down upon him hard; and that unfortunately he was in possession of a secret of Dean's which he must at once assure Dean that he would never betray, otherwise his life and liberty might be in danger. Now, do you understand that perfectly?"

"Perfectly."

"And can you do your part of it?"

"Yes, sir."

"While you are talking and Dean is replying, I will be looking on."

"I understand, sir."

"And when you have arrived at that point, you will cease to talk, and let me do the rest of it for you."

"Very good, sir."

"If my surmise concerning Dean is the correct one, I think he will say or do something to betray himself during that interview."

"And we will go to-night?"

"I will call for you at seven o'clock."

"I will be ready."

"And in that case I do not think it is necessary for me to call upon either Mrs. Forbes or Mrs. Robertson; at least, not at present."

"You know best, sir."

"And if, by chance, either of them should call you up on the phone, or should call here, you are to say nothing whatever of me, or of any effort that is being made to trace your husband or theirs along the lines that we are working."

"I will remember."

Nick took his leave then, but when he reached the steps and was about to pass down them to the street, he encountered a messenger boy, who was at that moment fastening his bicycle to the gate post, preparatory to ringing the bell of that particular house.

"What is it, boy?" he asked.

"Cable, sir," replied the boy. "Cable for Mrs. Philander Morrison."

Nick took the message from the boy and passed it to her, for she had followed him to the door. Then, while she broke the seal, he signed the book and dismissed the boy.

As he did so, he heard a glad cry from the woman behind him.

"It is all right," she said. "I have heard from my husband."

"Indeed!" said the detective. "Let me see what he has to say."

Then he took the message in his hand and read:

"'Am sailing for home to-day. Arrive eight days.'"

It was signed Philander Morrison.

"I am afraid, madam, that I would not put too much confidence in that cable. It could easily be ordered from the other side by a man with the power that Dean possesses.

"I do not say that it is not from your husband, but I think we will make the call this evening, just the same, and during that call you will forget that you have received this. Now, oblige me in another matter."

"Yes, sir."

"Without altering your position, look over my shoul-

der at a man you will see passing slowly down the street on the other side. Do you see him?"

"Yes."

"Have you ever seen him before?"

"Yes, often. He has loitered along that side of the street for the last week. I think he is a new boarder in the house with the marble steps. He sits on those steps and smokes half the time."

"Quite likely. I happen to know him. He belongs to a private detective agency that is not particular as to the character of their cases, and his business consists in watching this house."

"Do you think so?"

"Without a doubt. If you will watch him from behind your curtain you will understand the truth of what I say."

"I will do so."

"Very good. I will go now. I will keep this cable, if you don't mind."

"And you will be here at seven?"

"At seven sharp. Remember, the other half of the card I gave you will identify me, otherwise you might not wish to admit me."

At the corner, Nick turned, but he stopped the instant he had passed out of sight around it.

Then he walked quite slowly, a distance of three or four rods, while all the time he was busily engaged in making alterations in his general appearance, and when at length he did turn about again, even Mrs. Morrison would not have recognized him, had he applied again at her door.

But it was not her door that was his destination now. In fact, he had none, but as he descended the steps of her house, he had seen a closed automobile turn into the avenue from the corner below, and he had seen it drive up to the curb and stop there, in obedience to a signal from the man he had just pointed out to Mrs. Morrison.

Nick Carter wished to know the business of that automobile, but even he had no thought what it really was.

CHAPTER VI.

NICK CARTER'S UNIQUE METHODS OF WORK.

As Nick Carter turned back into the street where the Morrison residence was located, he saw the automobile start away again, turn the corner, and disappear.

For a moment the detective thought that he might have been mistaken after all, but he was given to following his first impressions about things, and, as the shyster detective seemed to be content to remain where he was for the present, Nick thought it would do no harm if he also waited.

He knew perfectly well that the detective he had noticed would be lynx-eyed for everything that happened in the street, and that if he appeared to loiter, he would be noticed at once, so he had recourse to an old expedient, but, nevertheless, a good one.

He ran up the steps of the first house he came to and rang the bell.

It happened to be one of those houses where the bell is not answered quickly, and so quite five minutes passed before it was answered.

Then he inquired for a name which he felt assured would not be the names of the people who really lived there, and upon being informed that no such names were known at that house, he apologized for disturbing them, descended the steps, and walked three houses farther down, when he repeated the experiment.

In this way he not only killed time, but he fooled the detective who waited on the steps of the house where Mrs. Morrison had said he lived.

As Nick was in the act of ringing a bell for the third time, the automobile reappeared.

It turned into the street as it had done in the first place, and now it drove rapidly along, without hindrance or signal from the man on the steps, until it arrived opposite the Morrison house, when it turned up to the curb and stopped.

"Ha! I thought likely," mused Nick.

A man descended from the automobile, mounted the steps of the Morrison residence, and rang the bell; and Nick smiled broadly when he recognized in that person the so-called superintendent of the same agency to which the man on the steps belonged.

"Good!" he said. "I think I see the game now."

However, he did not move. He waited where he was, for further developments.

Presently they happened.

Mrs. Morrison, who had evidently been watching through the curtain, as Nick had suggested, came to the door in person.

Nick, of course, was not near enough to overhear any of the conversation which passed between her and her caller, but he could see that she gave a start of surprise when she listened to the first words he uttered.

Then, for a moment, she seemed to parley, and then suddenly to decide upon some point that appeared to be of importance.

She went into the house and closed the door, while the man, who had summoned her, waited on the steps outside.

"I wonder if she is fool enough to swallow their bait," mused Nick. "I put her down as rather a smart woman; still, she is so anxious—I wonder if it is best for me to interfere, or to let her go her way and follow where they lead? The trouble is that I can't follow without being headed off by that fellow on the steps."

He thought a moment and then he smiled broadly.

"Yes," he said to himself. "There is one way. It is rather heroic, but it will do the business, and I think I will do it."

While he cogitated in this way, the woman, Mrs. Morrison, reappeared.

This time she was dressed for the street, and, without hesitation, she descended the steps and entered the automobile.

Not a word had been uttered which Nick could hear, and he pondered over what excuse might have been brought to her to induce her to enter the automobile and to drive away with a stranger.

"If it weren't for that cable," he mused, "I should think it the old and stale expedient of sending a forged letter to say that her husband wants her, but such a thing wouldn't work with her at all since the receipt of that cable, nor would Morrison's enemies resort to it when they know that she must have the cable by this time—that is, of course, if they sent it, and I am satisfied that they did that."

The man who had brought the message—whatever it was—to Mrs. Morrison, entered the automobile with her.

The chauffeur put on the power, and the automobile moved rapidly away.

In the meantime, Nick Carter had not been idle.

He had moved, step by step, farther down the street until, and just at the instant when the automobile started away, he was within six feet of the steps whereon the shyster detective was seated.

The starting of the automobile was Nick Carter's signal to act.

With a quick bound, he turned and leaped upon the steps.

With a motion that was almost simultaneous with the spring, he seized the man by the throat with his left hand, while with his other he struck him a quick, knock-out blow on the point of his chin.

It was the sort of blow which pugilists claim does not hurt, but only stuns; all the same, it is advisable for the readers not to experiment with them unless they are prepared for headaches.

Whether this particular blow hurt or not, it certainly stunned, for the fellow lay back against the steps without a sigh or a sound.

He did not so much as move after Nick's knuckles came in contact with his chin—and Nick Carter did not wait to see whether he did or not.

His purpose was accomplished.

He did not wish the man to know that he was watching that automobile, or that he intended to follow it, and so, in order to carry out the deception and to keep it alive when the man's senses should return, Nick deftly helped himself to the fellow's watch and chain, and hurried after the motor car.

"I can return the watch and chain at my leisure," he muttered, as he dashed down the street. "In the meantime, its absence will explain to that chump why he was touched on the jaw—that is, it will explain it the way I wish it explained."

The automobile was now moving rapidly, though it had been held up, shortly after it had got under way, by a congestion of traffic, and Nick was obliged to do some sprinting not to lose sight of it after it turned the corner.

However, he did not, and, fortunately, when he did turn the corner to discover that it was yet within his range of vision, he also discovered a taxicab, disengaged, moving slowly through the street.

"Here you go for a five-dollar fee," he said to the astonished chauffeur, leaping upon the running board, and pointing toward the fleeing automobile. "Keep that limousine in sight without permitting its chauffeur to know that you are doing it, and you get a five spot besides your regular fare."

Five spots do not grow in chauffeurs' pockets, and Nick had to say no more.

The taxicab was turned as if it were on a pivot, and it dashed after the automobile so quickly that there was no perceptible pause in Nick's chase; and now he settled himself back in the seat, lit a cigar, and took things easy, for he could keep the automobile that contained Mrs. Morrison in sight without any difficulty.

He was rather surprised a moment later, however, to see it turn into Fifth Avenue, and so to start uptown instead of in the other direction, which he had expected it to take.

"I cannot even guess what inducement they could have offered her to enter that automobile," he mused. "It must have been a good one."

There was, however, a greater surprise still in store for him presently, for after a drive of almost half an hour, the automobile drew up in front of no less a place than the residence of that great personage, Daniel J. Dean himself.

"Whew!" whistled Nick. "This is getting interesting. I wonder if old Dean can be home at this hour; and if he is, what in the world he happens to want of Mrs. Morrison. I would not be surprised if the old reprobate will end by supplying the very clew he is trying so hard to conceal."

When the automobile came to a stop, the man got out of it first, and then turned and assisted Mrs. Morrison to alight, while the taxicab in which Nick was seated drew up at the curb and waited.

Watching, Nick saw her mount the steps, saw the door of the residence swing open to admit her before she was halfway to it, saw her enter, and saw the door close behind her.

"I'd give a big, red apple to know what is about to happen in that house," mused the detective; "to know what old Dean, or whoever is to represent him, will say to her during the next five minutes. One thing is quite certain: He cannot mean to keep her there, or—— But, hold on! I'm not so sure of that."

The man who had been message bearer and companion to Mrs. Morrison on the drive, now reëntered his automobile and drove away.

"You may go," mused the detective. "I know where and how to find you whenever I want you, and I should not wonder if I could find a way to make you talk, too. It is more than likely that I'll make a stab at it, anyhow, before long. Just now, my duty is here."

"Where to now, sir?" asked his own chauffeur at that juncture.

"Nowhere, just at present," replied Nick. "Stand where you are till I tell you to move."

"Yes, sir."

Two solid hours passed in this manner, during which there was no sign of anybody around the residence of Daniel Dean.

But then, when two hours had passed, the front door opened and a man came out.

One glance at him was sufficient to assure Nick that he was Dean's valet, and that he was bent on an errand of importance.

"Chauffeur," he called, "keep that fellow in sight. If he gets on a car, follow the car. If he gets off again, follow him. Don't lose him. And say!"

"Yes, sir."

"If he happens to cross the street in front of you where there aren't too many people around, and you can manage to knock him down without hurting him very much, do it."

"Do you mean that, sir?"

"Mean it? Of course I mean it."

"All right, sir. I'll see what can be done. Is it worth another five spot?"

"Two more, if you don't break any bones, or hurt him much."

"Then consider it done, if the cove crosses the street."

And two blocks farther down it was done exactly as Nick had wished.

CHAPTER VII.

A WOMAN'S SHREWDNESS.

They had passed down Fifth Avenue to the Plaza, across it and into Fifty-eighth Street, when the opportunity came.

The man they were following suddenly darted out into the street and attempted to cross it, and he did so at a moment when the taxicab was almost abreast of him.

It was the opportunity which the chauffeur had waited for.

With a deft twist of the wrist, he turned his car so that the mud guard came into violent contact with the pedestrian, with the result that he was thrown from his feet to the pavement, and only for the expertness of the chauffeur must have been crushed beneath the wheels of the taxicab.

At almost the instant the mud guard struck the man, Nick Carter was out of the taxicab beside him.

"Are you hurt?" he inquired, and there was real anxiety in his voice, for he really feared lest the experiment might have cost the man a broken bone or two.

Then, before the man could reply, Nick lifted him in his arms and bore him to the taxicab.

"Whether you are hurt or not," he said, "I will see you safely to your destination now. No bones are broken, I see."

"My shoulder is bruised," said the man, as Nick helped him into the taxicab.

"I'll plaster that with a ten-dollar bill, my man, besides taking you to your destination. Do you think that will cure it?"

"It ought to, sir. I'm much obliged, I'm sure. Most people would have driven on without stopping to ask questions."

"Well, I'm not that sort," replied Nick.

With the deftness of the most expert of pickpockets, Nick searched the valet while he was assisting him into the taxicab, that is, he searched the pockets where the man would be likely to carry a letter—and he found it.

In the second pocket into which the detective introduced his fingers, he discovered the letter, for he had been confident from the start that the man had been sent out to deliver one.

Without a qualm of conscience, Nick relieved him of it, and transferred it to his own.

"Now, my man," he said, when they were seated side by side, "where would you like me to put you down?"

The valet gave the address of Philander Morrison.

"Ah!" said Nick. "The architect."

"Yes, sir. That is the man."

"I happen to know him. He is out of town, I think."

"Well, sir, I don't know anything about that. I am only to leave a letter there and to return to my employer as soon as I do so."

The mention of the letter led Nick to fear that the valet might feel in his pocket to discover if he had it safely, so he hastened to produce the ten-dollar bill he had promised.

For a moment the detective seemed to hesitate, with the bill in his hand, and then he remarked, as if speaking to himself:

"I wonder if another five dollars would——"

"What is that, sir?" eagerly asked the valet.

"I was thinking," said Nick. "You are not very much hurt."

"Really not at all, sir."

"And I have an important engagement."

"Yes, sir."

"Now, if I were to add five dollars to this ten, and were to put you down here instead of taking you all the way to your destination, do you think that you would feel compensated for the inconvenience to which you have been subjected?"

"Well, sir, if you'll promise not to hurt me any more than you have done now, you may run over me every day in the week at the same price."

"Ha! ha!" exclaimed Nick, with a good imitation of a hearty laugh. "Not bad that. You're a right good fellow, I suspect; however, I don't care to go through the experience every day if you do. I shouldn't wonder if it really hurt me worse than it did you."

"I'm quite sure that it did, sir."

"Then here are the fifteen dollars. I will drop you here."

"Very good, sir."

Two minutes later the valet was hurrying down the street intent upon delivering a letter which Nick Carter, safely in the taxicab, and driving rapidly in the opposite direction, was at that moment engaged in reading.

And talk about surprises!

"I'll have to admit," mused Nick, pausing for a moment in the reading, "that the best of us get taken in at times. I was right, however, when I said that she was a smart woman. It is certain that she fooled me all right."

Here is the letter he read:

"My Darling Phil: As you know, Mr. Dean sent for me, and we both thought it best that I should go and see what he wanted. I am here in his house, and he is waiting while I write this note. He is to see it and read it when it is finished.

"He knows that you are still in the city—that you have not disappeared. How he knows it I have no idea; but he does.

"He assures me that if I will send for you and induce you to come here and talk with him, that neither you nor I need fear any but the pleasantest consequences. He merely wants us both to go to Australia to live, and he will supply money enough to keep us in luxury as long as we live; and he threatens all sorts of things if you do not come.

"So, I say come, and come at once. You know how to get here without being discovered. I need not suggest anything on that score now. I have consented to remain here at Mr. Dean's till you come, as a sort of hostage, so do not be too long in getting here, as I wish to be at home at seven o'clock in order to keep an important engagement. Minnie."

It is not surprising that Nick Carter emitted several very distinct whistles while he perused that note.

"Humph!" he said; and looked at the letter again. Then at the envelope.

It had been imperfectly sealed, so that the detective had easily pulled it open. The address was also written plainly on the back of it, although, instead of being addressed to Philander Morrison, as it should have been, the name upon it was "John Lawson."

"Evidently Mr. Morrison is acting as his own butler," thought the detective.

Then for a moment he was lost in deep thought, and then suddenly a smile broke over his face.

"Chauffeur," he called.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you remember that corner where you picked me up?"

"Sure, sir."

"Try and see how quickly you can get me there now. Don't wait to ask questions, but go."

The chauffeur had a good car, and he proved it.

They dashed down the street at a rate of speed which threatened to get the police after them, but fortunately they escaped that experience.

"Wait here," said Nick; and he leaped out and started through the street on foot toward the house of Philander Morrison.

"Now, if I could meet that valet, it would be great luck," he thought, "and I think I am here first."

As he walked up the street he looked in every direction for the man he had knocked senseless, but that individual had disappeared.

"Evidently he had enough of it," thought Nick. "He does not fear any immediate interruption from his chief and so he has gone off to nurse his hurt with a few drinks. Later, he will swear that he did not leave his post for a minute. And still later he will find his watch waiting for him at his office, and wonder how it got there.

"Hello! There is my worthy friend, the valet, turning the corner. Now, when he discovers that he has lost the letter, what will he do? Will he turn around and start for home, or will he ring the bell? I think I won't take any chances in this game now. I'll give him the letter before he has a chance to decide that question."

The detective had closed and resealed the flap of the envelope, so that it did not show that it had been disturbed, and now he raised it aloft and waved it at the approaching valet.

Presently they came together on the street and recognition seemed to be mutual.

"Here, my man," said Nick, holding the letter out in his hand. "You dropped this in my cab. It might be important, you know, so I hurried after you. Here it is."

"Oh, sir! How can I ever thank you——"

"Tush! Never mind that. If you were my man, and had a letter to deliver, I should wish you to deliver it. That is all. It was my fault that you were run down, you know, and your employer might have blamed you for it. As it is, nobody is to blame, if you choose not to mention the circumstance when you return."

"No fear of my mentioning it, sir, now that I've got it again. It is not necessary, is it, sir?"

"Certainly not."

Nick Carter returned to his taxicab.

"Chauffeur," he said.

"Yes, sir."

"You are a good driver. I'm going to keep my contract with you now, and at the same time make another one. Here is your money."

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir."

"Can you skip away from here now, secure some more gasoline, and be back here in about four seconds?"

"Hardly that, sir. But I can do it in fifteen minutes."

"Then do it. You won't lose any money by the transaction—unless you happen to mention the fact that you have this job; in that case you will not only lose your job, but you are likely to take home a broken jaw as well. I've got work for you, chauffeur. I want to capture one more man between this and dark; and, chauffeur, I want you to drive to my house as soon as we get him."

"Yes, sir. Who——"

"And, chauffeur, I'm Nick Carter. Now, skip!"

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE VILLAIN IS UNMASKED.

"You are a minute and a half late, chauffeur," said Nick, when the taxicab drew up at the corner where he awaited it.

"I hope, sir, that I am not too late."

"No, you are in plenty of time. Now, listen. Get off of your seat and come here."

"Yes, sir; here I am."

"Do you see that house with the vines trailing over the front of it?"

"I do, sir."

"I want you to stand with your taxicab so that you can watch the door of that house, and so that I, inside the taxicab, can see it at the same time. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"That fellow you knocked down in the street a little while ago has just delivered a letter at that house. After a while a man will come out of it. I haven't the least idea how he will look, but it is not likely that more than one man is there at all, so only one can come out of it."

"Yes, sir."

"I'll rap on the glass if I see him first. If you see him first, you rap."

"Yes, sir."

"Then I want you to drive up quickly and overtake him soon after he passes the next corner."

"After he has turned the corner, sir?"

"Yes, and not until then, either."

"And what then, sir?"

"Drive right up alongside of him and stop. Speak to him if necessary; only make him stop long enough for me to get to him."

"The point is that I do not wish to attract attention from others."

"I understand, sir."

"Do you know where I live?"

"Betcher life I do, sir."

"Very well. When I get the man inside the taxicab, don't wait for instructions, but drive there as soon as you can."

After that a half hour passed in silent waiting, and then, from the position he occupied, Nick saw a man appear on the steps of the house he was watching.

He appeared to be an old man, quite bent with age, although he ran down the steps with a light grace which belied his looks.

"He's not much good at living up to a disguise," muttered the detective, as he tapped on the glass.

At the same instant the taxicab started.

The chauffeur, so thoroughly instructed, carried out his directions to the letter, and when Philander Morrison passed the corner and turned it, the taxicab drew up beside him.

"Hi, there!" shouted the chauffeur.

But if he expected the call to bring Morrison to a stop, he was mistaken. Instead, the architect leaped away and would have run, had not Nick Carter been too quick for him.

The detective had the door on the latch, and the instant the taxicab halted, he leaped to the ground, so that when the chauffeur spoke, his hand was already against the architect's shoulder.

That one leap was all he took, for he was brought around with a sharp turn so that he stood facing the detective.

"What does this mean, sir?" he sputtered, attempting the indignant.

"I wish to have a talk with you, Morrison," replied Nick coolly. "I am Nick Carter, although I do not look exactly as I did the last time we met. Will you get into the taxicab quietly and come with me, or shall I be compelled to use force?"

"Am I under arrest?"

"You will be, mighty soon, if you do not obey me without question."

"Very well, I will go."

In another moment they were in the taxicab together, and driving rapidly toward Nick Carter's house.

"That is rather an original sort of a joke you have been playing, isn't it?" asked the detective.

"What joke do you mean? I don't understand you."

"Don't you? Perhaps you will understand me better a little later on."

"What are you going to do with me?" asked Morrison.

"Just now I'm going to take you to my house."

"What for?"

"To see if I can induce you to answer a few questions I shall ask about Mr. Daniel J. Dean."

"I have told you once all that I know about him."

"Have you, indeed? We will see about that. Where were you going now?"

"For exercise."

"Had you no destination in view?"

"None whatever."

"Where is your wife?"

"My wife? What has she got to do with——"

"Where is she?"

"She has gone for a ride."

"Where?"

"In the park."

"What a consummate liar you are, Morrison!"

"Well," was the dogged reply, "if you know the answers better than I do, why do you ask questions?"

"Merely to prove that you are a liar."

"You have no right to arrest me without a warrant."

"I'll take the right, then."

"What are you going to do with me?"

"Lock you up."

"Where?"

"In my house."

"What for?"

"So that I will know where you are while I do your errand for you."

"Do my errand for me? What do you mean?"

"I mean that I will make that call for you."

"What call?"

"Upon our mutual acquaintance, Mr. Dean."

Morrison laughed outright.

"So you thought I was going to see Dean, did you?"

"No; I know you were."

"You are off your base, Nick Carter."

"Oh, I guess not. I'll take chances, anyway, and make the call."

"You won't get in."

"Won't I? Why not?"

"You'll see."

"Morrison," said Nick calmly, "when you were mixed up in that bond business, I only thought that you were a good man gone wrong for once, and I felt sorry for your wife. Now, I know that you are a scoundrel clear through."

"Damn you, Carter——"

"Hush, or I'll hurt you! You are a scoundrel clear through. You haven't a redeeming quality, as far as I can see, and you have done the worst thing a man could do, for you have forced your wife to become an abettor in your villainy."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked Morrison sullenly.

"I'm going to send you to Sing Sing before I am through with you—even if old Dean and all the others have to go there with you."

"They will have to."

"That remains to be seen."

"You're right it does."

"Where are your friends?" asked Nick suddenly.

"What friends?"

"Forbes and Robertson?"

"Find out."

"I will find out. Don't give yourself any worry on that point. Here we are. Climb out, now, and walk into the house quietly. Don't try any monkey shines. I haven't taken the trouble to see if you have any weapons about you, but if you so much as make a move to use one, you'll think that the Flatiron Building has fallen on top of you."

Inside the house, Nick conducted his prisoner to the top floor and into a room which he kept prepared for the reception of just such individuals.

There was an iron belt in that room, with a padlock on it, and this belt was fastened to the wall by a chain and staple. Before Morrison realized what was happening, the belt was locked around his waist, and he was chained to the wall.

"Would you chain me up like a dog?" he demanded fiercely.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" rejoined Nick.

"I'll get even with you for this."

"It strikes me that you have been trying rather hard to get even with me as well as with other people I know for a month past."

Without waiting for an answer, Nick stretched forth one hand and unceremoniously pulled the wig and beard from the head and face of his prisoner. Then he left the room, and presently returned with an extra suit of clothes.

"I'll trouble you to take off what you have on, and dress yourself in these—unless you prefer to remain undressed," he said.

"What are you going to do?" demanded Morrison.

"I'm going to perform an old trick of mine. I am going to make myself up to look so much like you that your own wife will not know the difference, if she doesn't get too close to me. Then, on top of that, I'll put on

the disguise you have just worn so awkwardly; and after that, Morrison, I'm going to Daniel Dean's in order to answer in person the very tender note your wife just sent to you from there."

CHAPTER IX.

THE FURY OF A WOMAN.

Readers of the Nick Carter adventures are familiar with many of the great detective's talents, one of which was that, with a few moments' practice, he could imitate almost any voice to such a degree of perfection as to deceive the most intimate associates of that person—for a time.

Another was his ability with the make-up.

Given the size and figure, and he could so transform himself that it was an easy matter for him to represent almost any person he wished.

In the case of Morrison, the size and figure were almost the same, and, with a little deft padding here and there, it was made to appear exactly the same, from head to foot.

To copy the man's face was an easy matter for the detective, and the prisoner himself gasped with surprise as he watched the gradual transformation which the detective wrought, until an observer looking into the room would have thought there were twin brothers there, or that there were two Philander Morrisons in the world.

From the moment when Nick mentioned the letter, however, Morrison had not spoken at all.

He lapsed into a sullen silence, from which the bantering of the detective could not rouse him at all; and he remained so to the last, deigning no remark when the detective at last withdrew from the room, and started to make his call upon Daniel Dean.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon when he finally appeared at the house, and he was on the point of ringing the bell when the door was opened, and he was bidden to enter.

It was the same valet who had carried the note who admitted him, and he looked none the worse for having been knocked down in the street by a taxicab; doubtless, he still could feel the heat of that fifteen-dollar plaster that had been applied to his wounds.

He pointed silently at a door at the end of the hall, and thither Nick Carter strode, with the stooping walk which Morrison had assumed in the disguise as his own butler.

As he entered the room, Mrs. Morrison started forward toward him, but it was evidently not for the purpose of embracing him, as Nick feared for an instant.

"What a fool you are!" she exclaimed, with fine scorn. "You wear a disguise like a hobby horse. Any fool could tell that it is a disguise."

"I suppose so," replied Nick. "However, I do the best I can."

"So," she said, "you have decided to adopt the humble, have you? You could read between the lines of that little note of mine, could you? I told Mr. Dean that there was no use in fooling with you any longer."

All this was rather in the nature of a surprise to the detective. He had not expected just that sort of greeting, and he did not know what reply to make, so he wisely decided to appear surly, and to say nothing unless he was compelled to do so.

He could see old Daniel Dean seated in a big chair back in the corner. He was rubbing his cold hands together constantly, and smiling with that inscrutable expression in which there was no suggestion of mirth.

"You did not hurry, it seems," continued Mrs. Morrison; and Nick wondered if, after all, she really was Mrs. Morrison. He was beginning to feel doubts upon that point.

"I came as soon as it was possible to do so," he replied, in a low tone.

"It is a wonder that you came at all, knowing why you were sent for," she retorted.

"But I don't know why I was sent for," said Nick boldly.

"Oh, don't you? So, you're going to try that game, are you?"

"I'm not playing any game."

"Bah! It was only this morning that you said that you were playing a game for millions, and that you would win out, or that the whole push would go under with you."

"Well; I meant it all right, all right."

"Oh, you did!"

"Yes, I did."

"Suppose you listen to what Mr. Dean has to say on that point."

"I haven't heard him say anything so far," retorted Nick, turning partly around so that he faced the multimillionaire.

"You will find that I have very little to say," said Dean coldly.

"That won't be any new discovery," said Nick.

"I have made up my mind that I will not be bled by you any longer, Morrison," said Dean, with more animation than he had shown before. "You have never undertaken to do a thing for me in which you have not miserably failed, and you think because you have got certain documents and a signed confession of mine in your hands, that you can defy me. The time has come when you can do so no longer."

"You think so," said Nick. "Perhaps I do not."

Again the old man smiled.

"You have yet to find out the full power of money, Morrison," he said.

"I've been trying hard enough to find it out for some time. I ought to come pretty near to knowing before long."

The old man cackled a dry laugh.

"You have had your last chance," he said, and there was a strange menace in his remark, which the detective tried in vain to fathom.

"How is that?" he asked.

"You will never have another chance. That is what I mean."

"Still I do not understand you."

"Shall I put it in plain words which you cannot fail to understand?"

"Yes, I wish you would."

"You will please to understand, before I go on, that it will be useless for you to attempt to escape from this house, or even from this room. I have prepared against such an undertaking."

Nick shrugged his shoulders.

"This night will see the last of my enemies. Minnie, here, is through with you forever. She says she never had any use for you anyway, and that she is tired of pre-

tending she is the wife of a man who hasn't courage enough to kill a fly."

Nick turned his eyes toward the woman and saw that she was laughing.

"Go on," he said to Dean. "You are doing the talking, I'm not."

"There are only four people alive in the world to-day who have given me cause to fear them, only four for whom I feel fear, and consequently only four whom I hate. You know who and what they are as well as I."

Nick nodded. He preferred to hear the old man mention the names.

"They are Forbes and Robertson, yourself, and Jared Logan."

"And," interrupted Nick, with sudden inspiration, "no matter who it is you hate the most, it is certain that you fear Jared Logan more than all the others put together."

But the years which Daniel Dean had passed in amassing his millions had also schooled his temper into perfect control, and he did not alter the expression of his expressionless face, nor change the tone of his voice as he replied:

"There is no doubt of that, Morrison."

"Well, why have you induced me to come here now?" asked Nick dryly, still playing the part of Philander Morrison with consummate skill.

"To offer you, as I have said, your last chance."

"Suppose you put that offer into words."

"Is that necessary?"

"It would seem so, since I demand it."

"I want that confession which you once made me sign, that confession which you burned out of me with your horrible electric light, when I would have defied a pistol or a knife, but——"

Nick laughed aloud, for he caught his cue direct this time.

"But when you did not dare to defy the terrible light, which would have burned a hole through your dried-up old carcass much quicker than a bullet would have pierced it. Well, go on. You are not through yet."

"I want that confession. I want the other papers of mine that are in your possession. I want your signature to a written statement which I have had drawn up. I want your abject obedience to the terms I shall make—and then, you may go scot-free, with a million dollars cash on your person. After the papers are turned over to me, and the conditions I shall make have been complied with, you will be given the million dollars in cash and you will be escorted on board the ship which will take you direct from here to Australia, where you are to remain until you die."

"Beautiful," said Nick, with fine sarcasm. "Do you suppose that I do not see into your game? Do you suppose that the ship on which I sailed would ever arrive at the other side of the world? A man who could give me a million dollars, could give somebody else two millions to get rid of me. Australia, in my case, would be located at the other side of eternity. But we will let that pass for the present. Tell me what you are to do with Forbes and Robertson?"

For a moment the old man was silent, and then he chuckled softly to himself.

"Truly," he said, "that is a sorry joke. I hope, for your sake, that the devil, who now has them in his keeping, will mark it down to your credit, and be inclined to leniency with you because of it, when you get into his hands yourself."

"And Jared Logan?" asked Nick, ignoring the break he had made, and changing the subject as quickly as possible so that no more could be made of it. Still, even as he spoke, he realized that the woman, Minnie, had started forward toward him with a new interest in the conversation, and he knew that it was her he had to fear rather than the old man before him.

Daniel Dean chuckled audibly.

"The house of Logan will go out of existence to-night," he said. "You need not trouble yourself about him. To-morrow he will be beyond fearing—he and all who belong to him—he and all his power to injure me will be beyond the——"

"Hush!" said the woman.

As she spoke, she stepped forward with a quick gesture and tore the false beard from the detective's face; but as the reader knows, Nick had made up even under the beard and wig so that he so exactly resembled Morrison, that she was still, for an instant, deceived.

But it was only for an instant, and during that time she continued to gaze with flashing eyes upon the detective.

Then, suddenly and without warning, she uttered a sharp cry and leaped toward him. Her right hand flew out and struck him sharply in the face, as she cried out:

"You fraud! You scoundrel! You are not Morrison at all! I knew it from the first. You are a detective! I know you! You are Nick Carter!"

CHAPTER X.

"A MIGHTY LUCKY GUESS FOR ALL."

It was said at the close of the last chapter that the woman's hand struck Nick Carter in the face, but that statement is not entirely correct, for the blow did not reach his face, although it was totally unexpected.

Instead of that his own hand flew up and caught her by the wrist, and then she was forced slowly but surely to her knees, while all the time the detective kept his eyes fixed upon the old man, who had started to his feet with a cry of amazement.

"Dean!" cried the woman. "Dean! He is not Morrison! He is Nick Carter! If you value your life and mine, never let him escape!"

And now the old man was standing upright.

He tottered as he stood there, but whether from weakness, or from terror, or from eagerness, it is impossible to say.

"Come!" he called out, and then, as if it were a prearranged signal, the three doors which opened into the apartment flew wide ajar simultaneously, and through each one of them two men stepped into the room.

Of the six men who thus suddenly appeared in view, three held leveled rifles in their grasp, the muzzles of which covered Nick Carter's heart; and the remaining three were similarly armed, only that they each presented two revolvers instead, so that there were nine deadly weapons pointed at the detective, and he knew quite well that at a signal from the old millionaire nothing could stay those bullets from piercing his body.

He still grasped the woman's wrist, and now he drew her toward him and enveloped her in his arms, holding her close against him as his surest means of protection.

"Command them to shoot, if you will," he said calmly to her; and she, thoroughly frightened now that she saw her own danger, called out hysterically to Daniel Dean:

"Don't let them shoot, for God's sake! Don't you see that they will kill me also if they do so? Don't let them shoot!"

The old man grinned devilishly.

"Yes, I see," he cackled. "It makes a pretty picture. It also affords a great opportunity. One which I cannot, in my heart, find an excuse for neglecting. I can care for Morrison later on, but I am afraid that you, Minnie, will be the most difficult of all to rid myself of. Truly this is a great opportunity."

He paused and smiled at them, almost benignantly, and then, stepping back hastily against the wall, he said sharply:

"Shoot!"

But Nick Carter had not lost a motion that the old man made.

He had seen the devilish gleam come into the millionaire's eyes. He had noticed the expression of gloating exultation which swept across his face when the woman cried out to him not to shoot, and he saw that the crafty old villain instantly discovered a means of ridding himself of her as well as of him.

Therefore he was, in a measure, prepared for the order to fire.

So many times in his life had the detective dodged bullets, that the game was not new to him.

Just as the pugilist in a fight watches the eyes of his opponent, instead of his hands, so Nick Carter watched old Daniel Dean.

He saw and read correctly the changing expressions as they swept across his face; he saw him as he deliberately thought over the chances of having two persons killed instead of one, and he read the decision when it appeared in the cold glitter of those usually expressionless eyes.

He knew, then, that the bullets were coming. He knew that only a word was needed to speed them on their way, and that the word was trembling on the old man's tongue, ready for utterance, and he watched with all that nicety of deliberation and that directness of perception for which he was famed.

He knew that before the order was given, the old man would start back more out of range of the bullets, and he waited for that instant.

Then, when the old man did start back against the wall—just at the instant when he began that motion, Nick Carter also moved.

As Dean's lips parted to give the order to shoot, the detective tightened his grasp upon the woman, and as the word was uttered, he kicked her feet from under her, at the same time throwing out his own, so that they crashed to the floor together at the very instant that the firearms were discharged, almost with one report.

To a spectator, it would have appeared as if the bullets had pierced the two who were standing there covered by the weapons.

Indeed, it evidently appeared so to old Dean himself, for he started forward with a cry of exultation, and in such haste that he did not perceive that he had placed himself directly between his hired murderers and their intended victim.

Nick Carter remained perfectly still where he had fallen, and for an instant he wondered why the woman whom he had dragged down with him, in order to save her as well as himself from the bullets, also remained quiet.

But even as the thought that, perhaps, one or more of the bullets had struck her occurred to him, she seemed to recover her senses. With a quick wrench she pulled herself free from his grasp and struggled to her feet, and then, two of the hired assassins, who were at one side of the room, so that they could fire at her without danger of hitting Dean, fired again, and Minnie pitched forward on her face across the silent body of the detective, who was still feigning death.

Those second shots—those which really killed the woman, Minnie, filled the old man with terror. For an instant he believed that his men had actually fired at him, and he was almost beside himself with rage and abject terror.

"Go!" he yelled at them. "Get out of here and out of the house! Go! You have done the work for which I paid you, now begone. Go, curse you! Go!"

The men did not require a second bidding. They departed as they came, closing the doors behind them, and then, as the old man turned to look upon the deadly work which had been done at his bidding, Nick Carter cast aside the body of the woman, which almost covered him, and leaped to his feet, thus confronting the old scoundrel just as he was in the very act of bending over his victims in order to make sure that they were, indeed, dead, and that he need have no further fear of them.

As the old man attempted to leap back out of the reach of the detective, Nick's right hand shot forward and closed like a vise upon the arm of the millionaire.

"I'm not dead yet, by a long shot, Mr. Millionaire Dean," he said, with a grim smile. "I am very much alive, as you will presently discover; and now, if you place any value whatever on your own worthless life, you will do as I shall command you to do."

"Don't kill me! Don't kill me! I'll do anything you say!" pleaded Dean.

"Good! Then I will open one of those doors, so that you can call through it. When you can do that, you will order those men, one and all, to return to this room, one by one, unarmed. You will make any excuse you please, only get them here."

Dean wrung his hands together in agony.

"They have gone," he moaned. "It is impossible to call them back again. I ordered them all to leave the house. They were only too glad to go, and they have gone. There is not one of them within sound of my voice by this time."

"Nevertheless, call!" ordered Nick, and he opened one of the doors, still retaining his grasp on Dean.

But although the old man called, and called again and again, there was no reply, and at last, satisfied that they had, indeed, departed, the detective drew Dean again inside the room.

Then, with quick motions, he ran his hands along the old man's clothing to discover if he was armed, and quickly determining that he was not, he released him and stepped back.

"Sit in that chair, and do not dare to disobey me, if you value your life at all," he ordered, almost hurling the millionaire into the chair he designated.

Then he stepped quickly to the woman, and bent over her, but a glance sufficed to assure him that she was dead.

"See," he said, pointing toward her. "This is your work, and you shall suffer for it. No matter what else she was, she was still a woman, and you are her murderer."

There was a telephone upon the desk, and the detective seated himself there so that he faced Dean, placed the receiver to his ear, and called up the home of Jared Logan.

He was answered almost instantly, and it was Chick who came to the phone.

"Listen, Chick," he said. "I am at the house of old Daniel Dean. Now, do not ask questions, but do exactly as I say."

"All right," replied Chick, and Nick continued:

"I want you to get every living person out of that house as soon as you can. Don't wait to send for automobiles. Don't wait to get together more than the women's jewelry. Get out without delay. Take the whole outfit to the Mammoth Hotel; it is the nearest to you Wait for me there. Now get off the wire."

The detective hung up the receiver and waited a moment. Then he took it down again and replaced it at his ear.

"Hello, central!" he said. "Give me police headquarters as quickly as possible." Then, a moment later: "Police headquarters? All right. Give me the detective bureau." Then, a moment later: "That you, inspector. Good. This is Nick Carter. I have called you because I want the order to originate through you. I am at the house of old Dean. You know where it is. Will you call up the police station nearest here and have them send the reserves and a patrol wagon to this place as quickly as possible? Let them break in the door if it is not opened for them. Arrest everybody in sight. I am in the library with old Dean.

"We will wait where we are until the men get here, and I will wait here for the men to come, for I don't propose to let the old devil have an opportunity to escape. I think the house is empty of his hirelings, but I am not sure. Thank you.

"Now, one thing more, inspector. I have reason to believe that the entire establishment of Jared Logan is to be blown up with dynamite—or with something worse—at any moment. It may have already gone into the air for all I know. I have ordered the house emptied, but I neglected the adjoining houses. Get the people out of them if you can. Still, doubtless they will not receive more than a severe shaking up.

"Will you meet me at the Mammoth? Chick will be there with the Logans. I will go there as soon as I have delivered old Dean to the police. Good-by."

Nick replaced the receiver. All the while he had been talking he had not taken his eyes from the face of his prisoner, who cowered in the chair on the opposite side of the table.

But now Nick left his chair, and went around the desk until he stood facing the old scoundrel.

"I have only guessed at what you intended to do," he said, "but I can see by the expression of your haggard face that I have guessed with considerable correctness. Tell me, now, had you arranged to blow up the house of Jared Logan, with everybody in it?"

The old man nodded his head.

"When? At what time?" asked Nick.

"At seven-thirty o'clock. While they were at dinner," was the husky reply.

Nick looked at his watch. The hand pointed at seven-fifteen.

Again he seized the telephone, and once more he called for Jared Logan's number, while he prayed that his call might not be answered.

But there was an answer, and it was in the voice of his assistant, Chick.

"You, Chick? Is everybody out? All but you? You have about ten minutes—perhaps not so much. For once in your life, run!"

He put down the receiver for the last time.

"Dean," he said.

The old man did not reply.

"Dean!" he called again; and still the old man did not respond.

The detective left his chair and strode around the table to the chair where the multimillionaire was seated. His head had sunk forward on his breast, and he was motionless.

Nick grasped him by the shoulder and shook him, and the old wreck of a man tottered forward and would have fallen had the detective not seized him and straightened him up again.

"Has he fainted or is he dead?" the detective asked of himself.

But even as he propounded the question, the heavy jaw that had set itself so hard all through the life of the millionaire dropped. The eyelids parted ever so little, showing a pair of sightless, glassy eyeballs behind them, and Nick knew that it was death which had cheated the law.

"You have died, you old reprobate," mused Nick, while he put the body back in the chair so that it would not fall upon the floor; "died while there were a hundred things which I wanted you to explain, died without a moment for repentance or remorse, died before I could——"

There was a summons at the door, and the detective paused.

"Who is there?" he called out, crossing to it.

"Officers of the law," came the reply, and Nick threw wide the door, admitting the captain of the precinct.

"Whom have you arrested since you entered the house?" asked Nick.

"Not a soul. The house is deserted. There was not a person in it. We had to break our way in through the basement door."

"So!" said Nick, turning and addressing the dead man in the chair, as if he were still living. "You had prepared well for the terrors of this night, had you not? You had driven every servant away before the hour came for the killing you intended to do. You had only your hirelings with the guns, had you? And those hirelings? From whence came they? From the ship upon which you would have started Morrison for the antipodes? Doubtless. Ah! you old villain! Your villainy lingers around us even after your death."

"Captain," he continued, turning abruptly, "I haven't much to offer you in the way of prisoners. This woman was shot by the old man's order, in my presence. They—his hirelings—would have shot me also, only they missed; but she was as bad as her master."

"Two dead ones," remarked the captain grimly. Then he added: "I knew the woman. She used to be Minnie Williams. She was a bad character in Thirtieth Street. I suppose she was in some game with old Dean. So these are all you've got for me, eh?"

"That is all," assented Nick. "Have you searched the house?"

"My men are searching it now."

Five minutes later the men appeared, and among them they ushered two men.

"Forbes and Robertson," said Nick, when he saw them. "Where did you find them?"

"Locked and chained to the wall in the wine cellar," replied one of the policemen.

"How long have you been there?" asked Nick, turning to the man Forbes.

"Since the morning we left police headquarters," was the reply. "Old Dean sent for us, and like fools we came here. To-night we were to be taken away, or killed, I don't know which."

"Both, most likely," remarked Nick. Then, to the officer, he added:

"Take them to the station house. I will attend to them later."

Then, to the captain;

"Captain, this house is at your disposal. Will you send for the coroner and take charge now?"

"Sure."

* * * * * * *

Nick's chauffeur was still awaiting him. The arrival of the police patrol had not disturbed him, and Nick directed that he be driven without delay to the house of Jared Logan.

"There ain't much house left here, I reckon," said the chauffeur, as he leaped from the seat. "I don't know what has happened, but something seems to have gone up in the air. I can't get any closer. The fire engines and hook-and-ladder companies take up all the room."

The stately house was a mass of ruins.

"Drive to the Mammoth," ordered Nick, and there he found Chick awaiting him at the curb.

"Narrow escape that," said Chick. "The house went into the air before we were two blocks away. Lucky you telephoned when you did."

"And it was largely guesswork at that," replied the detective.

"A mighty lucky guess for us all," said Chick, with a laugh.

* * * * * * *

"We've got the entire outfit, Mr. Logan," remarked the detective, a few moments later. "I think you may travel to and from your office without an escort now."

THE END.

Next week's issue, No. 83, out April 11th, will contain one of the most remarkable tales you have ever read. The story is entitled "A Dead Man's Power; or, The Mystery of a Telephone Number." Lovers of good detective stories cannot afford to miss it.

THE SAILOR'S TOOTHBRUSH.

A bluff and coarse old-time sea captain caught a sailor one morning cleaning his teeth with a toothbrush. The old man seized the brush, snapped it in two, and tossed the pieces overboard. Then, his eyes flashing fire, he said:

"What are ye tryin' to do—corrupt the ship with this here effeminacy? Cleanin' yer teeth with a toothbrush! Why, ye swab, don't ye know that when an honest sailor wants to scrape the tobacker off his grinders he does it, like a man, with a marlinespike or a link of chain cable dipped in cinders outen the cook's galley?"

Silhouette or Shadow?

Or, A QUESTION OF EVIDENCE.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT POLLY MARKS SAW.

One of these persons was a middle-aged woman in a pale-blue morning gown, bedecked with white lace. The other was a buxom young servant girl, with round cheeks, a pretty face, and the brightest of bright, black eyes.

"What do you want here?" demanded the chief, the moment he saw them.

The elder at once made known her mission.

"I saw the people gathered about the street door, sir, and was told that a crime had been committed. While I was at breakfast this morning, my table girl casually remarked upon certain things which she saw last night from the window of her room across the way. Thinking her testimony might shed some light on this matter, I felt it was my duty to bring her over here."

"I'm obliged to you, madam," bowed the chief, with rather less austerity. "Is this the girl?"

"Yes, sir."

"What's your name, miss?"

"Polly Marks, please you, sir," said the girl glibly.

"Step in here, Polly Marks, and I'll hear your story. None other, madam, if you'll pardon me! Clear your halls of all but your lodgers and this lady, Mrs. Stratton. If any object to vacating, speak to me and I'll attend to the case. Then close and lock your street door, and if anybody rings bring me the caller's name. See to this at once, madam."

With which curt instructions, Chief Inspector Watts again closed the door against the persistent curiosity of both landlady and lodgers.

Polly Marks had entered rather gingerly, as if afraid of beholding some sickening sight. She appeared relieved when the interior of the room met her gaze.

"Now, my girl, what have you to tell?" asked the chief. "Don't be alarmed. Tell your story in your own way."

"Oh, I'm not alarmed, sir!" said Polly, with a quick flash of her dark eyes. "I've done nothing to be alarmed about. 'Twas the missus' idea bringing me over here at all."

"Well, what did you see last night that led her to do so?"

"I was sitting in my room, sir——"

"One moment! Show me your room from this window."

"That one, sir, on the top floor," said Polly, indicating a chamber in one of the houses of a block across the way. "The one where the curtain's blowing."

"Very good. It is directly opposite, and a story higher than this. Now go on."

That this girl was unusually bright there could be no

doubt. Keene pricked up his ears and slipped his note-book and pencil into the palm of his hand.

"I was sitting by the window," began Polly Marks, when Inspector Watts interrupted her:

"Do you know the hour?"

"Just before it struck eleven, sir. While I sat looking down into the street I saw a man and woman come along and enter this house. The man was the one who had this room, sir."

"Did they approach on this side of the street?"

"Yes, sir."

"From which direction?"

"That, sir."

"Walking fast or slow?"

"Mediumlike, sir!" said Polly, not at all confused by the chief's fusillade of questions.

"Could you see them plainly?"

"Not so very, sir. Still, I could see them the same's anybody sees in the evening. There's an electric light on the corner, sir."

"That's a hundred feet away. Could you see their faces?"

"Not to know 'em, sir."

"Did either of them show any hesitation before entering?"

"I reckon not, sir. They turned right up the steps and went in. But what made me watch after that, sir, was a man who came along right after them; and I guess he was following them."

"Why so?"

"Because, after they went in, sir, he ran across to my side of the street and stood staring up at the windows of this house, as if he was trying to see what room they had. I leaned out to see what he was up to, sir; but he soon backed close against the house, and I couldn't see him for the gutter."

"Can you describe the man at all?"

"Only that he was a pretty big man, that's all. I couldn't see his face. But I'd say he was rather a young man, sir, by the way he walked."

"Smartly, do you mean?"

"Yes, sir."

"What more, Polly?"

"Well, sir, while I was trying to look down at him over the gutter, I saw the gas flash up in this room, so I stared over here. The man who had rooms here had just lit that burner there," and Polly Marks indicated one of the arms of the pendent chandelier; "and the girl was standing right here by the table. She was laughing and clapping her hands. The curtain was high up and I could see them plainly."

"Was the girl young?"

"I'd say about my age, sir, and dressed in black. The window was shut, but I could see right in here. The man threw away his match, and was laughing at something the girl had said. Then he turned and said something to the girl, and she let him kiss her; and very kindlike he seemed about it, sir!"

"Respectful, do you mean?"

"Yes, sir. And then he came and pulled down the curtain, sir."

"And you were unable to see anything more?"

"Not then, sir!" exclaimed Polly, whose bright eyes and feminine curiosity had supplied her with quite a fund of valuable information.

"But I'm not done yet, sir," she continued volubly. "When I couldn't see in here, I went back to the party down below. I kind of thought there might be something up, and I wanted to know what 'twas."

"I'm glad you felt so!" said Inspector Watts dryly. "What next?"

"Well, sir, there wasn't any next for quite a little time, and I'd begun to fear the man on the sidewalk had gone about his business. But pretty soon I saw him cross the street again, and he ran up the steps and entered this house."

"With a key?"

"No, sir. He went right in, as if he already knew the door would open."

"Can you state whether or not he was one of the male lodgers here?"

"I know he was not, unless he is a new one, sir. Except the man who has this room, there have been but two. Both of them are small men, and I happen to know 'em both!" added Polly, with a quick smile and blush.

"Did the stranger hurry?"

"Rather, sir."

"Were there many people passing at that time?"

"None at all, sir. The street is quiet at night."

"Well, anything more?"

"I didn't think there'd be, but there was!" exclaimed Polly, with a toss of her head. "I guessed there might be a muss up in this room if that other man got in, and I was sorry the curtain was down. I didn't see anything for a time, sir, but after that I saw the shadow of the big man on the curtain. And 'twas plain as day, sir, what he was doing."

"And what was he doing?"

"He was trying to keep somebody from jumping out the window!" declared Polly, with added assurance.

Chief Inspector Watts stared at her for a moment, then demanded bluntly: "How do you know?"

"Because he had his arms stretched right across it, sir, just like that!" cried Polly, with her own buxom arms wide extended. "I can swear that's what he was doing, sir, though I didn't see the shadow of the one he was trying to stop. And he moved to one side again after a minute or so, and—and I didn't see anything more till the girl came out of the house."

"About how long had she been there?"

"Mebbe a quarter hour, sir."

"Did she come out alone?"

"Yes, sir; and hurried away in that direction."

"The same from which she had come."

"Yes, sir."

"Did you see anything more?"

"Not much, sir. I sat watching the window for a time, but I didn't see any more shadows. But I saw the gas put out a little later; and pretty quick after that the big man came out the front door."

"Which way did he go?"

"After the girl, sir."

"Did he hurry away?"

"He walked quite fast, sir."

"And then?"

"Then?" echoed Polly Marks demurely. "Then I went to bed, sir!"

Was the solution of this tragedy hidden within the disclosure of this artless girl?

Chief Inspector Watts turned to the one other occupant of the room.

"What do you say, Keene?" he asked gravely. "Do you think of anything more?"

"Ask her," said Keene deliberately, "if she saw any other person enter or leave the house?"

"No, sir, I did not!" Polly Marks answered quickly.

"And how long would you say it was, from the time the man and girl entered until the strange man departed after the light had been extinguished?"

"Just about half an hour, sir."

"I don't think of anything more," said Keene indifferently.

"Shall I go now, sir?" asked Polly of the inspector.

The latter drew up his portly figure, and turning to the inner room laid his hand on the knob of the door.

"Not quite yet, my girl," he replied, with considerable gentleness. "I first wish to impose a rather unpleasant sight upon you, and ask you to add to the service you already have done me. A man lies dead on the bed in this side room, Polly Marks. I want you to look at him, and tell me if he is the man you saw light the gas and kiss the girl. Will you do this for me?"

"Is—is there any b-b-blood, sir?" faltered Polly, with the roses fading from her cheeks.

"None, my girl."

"Then I will if—if I must."

"Do so, then! It will not be necessary for you to enter the room."

The chief opened the door.

The girl hesitated, trembling, then nerved herself to approach the threshold—and then shrank back with a low, shuddering cry, and covered her eyes with her hands.

"Yes, that's the man!" she cried faintly; and Detective Keene poured her a sip of wine from the sideboard.

"Thank you, my girl," said Inspector Watts. "You are quite positive of this fact?"

"I can swear to it if need be!" said Polly, with great earnestness manifest in her pale face. "Oh, but he has come to an awful end! That big man must have killed him before he put out the light and left the house!"

She had voiced to the letter the present opinion of the chief inspector of the detective service.

So much for the eyes and the voice of Polly Marks.

With the dismissal of the girl, who plainly had told her whole story, the landlady again appeared at the door, followed by the district medical examiner for whom the chief had sent.

The result of the further investigations of that morning may be briefly stated.

That Carroll Banks had been brutally murdered at a late hour the previous night, there was no room for doubt.

The method adopted was equally apparent. On the young man's neck were the livid bruises of the merciless hands of the assassin, evidently those of a large and powerful man, against whom the other must have been but as a child.

The body was clothed as when Banks had entered from the street, save alone the hat which had been discarded. In his pockets was found a moderate sum of money, a ring of keys, and his watch; but there were neither cards nor letters to give a clew to the solution of the tragedy, or to reveal the identity of his feminine companion.

The floors of the rooms offered nothing in the way of additional evidence, nor did subsequent inquiry among Mrs. Stratton's other lodgers shed further light on the affair.

The victim's father, whose grief needs no portrayal, could impart only that his son, then about twenty-two, had been a wayward youth, and frequently had lived away from his home for weeks at a time. Of the girl in black the father knew absolutely nothing.

The temporary disposal of the remains having been left to the medical examiner, whose duty required a professional autopsy, Inspector Watts and Sheridan Keene left the house together.

"Well, Shed, what do you make of it?" asked the chief.

"The discovery of the girl in black and the big man described by Polly Marks are quite necessary," observed Keene.

"I'll land them, however, if I press into service every officer on the force," declared the chief grimly.

"I hope so," nodded Keene. "Still, there are thousands of big men in the city, and thousands of pretty girls who dress in black. The solution of the case hinges upon but one of each."

CHAPTER V.

HEADING OFF THE DOGS.

With glaring leaders the evening papers of that date published their stories of the crime, and before night the main features not only were public property, but the fact also announced that the entire detective force was in hot search after the pretty girl in black and the stranger who had tracked her to the chambers of Carroll Banks. That this bold stranger was the assassin was a belief very generally accepted and expressed. How much of this was authoritative, and how much sensational exaggeration by the reporters is here immaterial.

As usual in such cases, the name of the chief inspector alone appeared in the newspapers' accounts of the investigation of the mystery, and the part played that morning by Detective Sheridan Keene received scarcely cursory notice.

Between these two officers, however, there existed a friendliness and coöperative spirit in which rivalry had no part. With characteristic discernment, Chief Watts had been quick to appreciate not only the modesty and reserve of the young officer, who for two years had been his subordinate, but likewise the fact that in Detective Keene he had a man of far more than ordinary acquirements and natural acumen.

These attributes were not the result of chance. In early life Keene had determined on the vocation he would adopt when a man, and had trained himself accordingly. Endowed with an observing eye, an analytical mind, keen to appreciate details, and a pronounced faculty for detecting and adjusting obscure relations, he further had equipped himself by untiring study to the aim in view, not only of the languages, chemistry, chirography, physical culture, and the practical methods of the most successful votaries of the detective art, but also the physiognomy of Lavater, until the human countenance became to him a far more reliable index of character than may, without a knowledge of the science, be easily imagined.

Hence it was but natural that Chief Watts had formed for him a most kindly affection, and soon had fallen into a way not only of consulting his opinion and judgment,

but also of assigning to him the most mysterious and complicated cases that came within the field of his official investigation.

That the Carroll Banks affair might prove to be one of these seemed imminent, unless the publicity given it should bring voluntary testimony from some quarter. Superficially, it appeared conclusive that the stranger who had been seen to enter and depart was the criminal; but the superficial view is rarely the one an astute and experienced detective is prompt to accept.

Early the following morning Keene was seated in a private office which he maintained in Pemberton Square, separate from his room at headquarters, when a man hurriedly entered, whose pale countenance evinced no ordinary state of perturbation. That he came with a definite mission, and was in desperate haste to relieve his mind, were declared with his first words.

"I say, Keene," he cried abruptly; "I'm in a devil's own scrape, and you must help me out of it! What case are you on—any? Thank God, I find you here! I was mortally afraid you might be away, for you are the only man on earth capable of pulling me out of my awful mess! What in thunder are you laughing at?"

"Partly at your garrulous excitement," said Keene, waving him to a chair; "and partly at the absurdity that you, Ben Herrick, can be in any scrape serious enough to warrant it."

They were old and firm friends—fellow students in college, fellow clubmen since; and Ben Herrick was widely known as one of the brightest and most popular of the wealthy young men about town.

"Well, the scrape is serious enough to warrant it!" he rejoined desperately; "and you'll not deny it!"

"What's the nature of it, Ben?"

"First of all," cried Herrick, with a headshake like that of a baited bull; "I want to ask you one question!"

"Well?"

"Do you believe me a man of my word?"

"Better than believe, Ben! I know you are!"

"And would you take my word against the devil's own appearances to the contrary?"

Keene surveyed him gravely for a moment. His white face and glowing eyes indicated that only some very serious matter could have actuated such a beginning as this.

"Yes, Ben," the detective said quietly. "I would bank upon your honesty as soon as that of any man on earth!"

"Thank you, Shed!" said Herrick feelingly. "But if I hadn't been sure of it, I'd not have come here. Surely not with such a disclosure as mine!"

"What is the disclosure, Ben?"

Herrick drew a long breath, and stared with wide eyes at his questioner.

"You know of that crime of night before last—the murder of Carroll Banks?" he demanded hoarsely.

"Yes."

"And that the police are making a red-hot search for the man who followed him to his chamber?"

"Certainly."

"Well, sir," and Herrick threw back his head with something like passionate defiance of police and of law; "I am the man!"

"Is that so?" said Keene quietly.

But he reached forth his hand, and turned the key in his door.

"You may gamble that I'd not say so if it weren't true—not to you, even!" Herrick added warmly. "It is too infernally true for a joke!"

The detective looked him over for a moment—the fine, forceful face and splendid figure of this man who had approached him with disclosure threatening life itself! And it well might be believed. Polly Marks had well described her man; for Ben Herrick carried good six feet of brawn and tissure, with a breadth of shoulder and depth of chest evincing mighty prowess.

"But I'm not guilty of any crime, Shed!" he immediately went on. "I had nothing to do with the killing of Banks, and I know absolutely nothing about it. But I realize my situation, even though innocent, and you must pull me out of it."

"I hope, for your sake, I may be able to do so," said Keene, smiling faintly.

"If you cannot, no man can!" cried Herrick warmly. "I resolved to come to you with the whole truth, knowing that you at least would believe me, and would turn heaven and earth to set me right. By doing this, moreover, I head off you dogs of the law who are after me; for my confession will refute a charge of attempting concealment. If you think it necessary to arrest and jail me, I'll swallow the dose; but I'd like to avoid it. It will go down smoother, however, if administered by you, Shed."

There was a rather affecting manliness in his impulsive utterances—those of a strong and ingenuous nature unexpectedly and heavily crossed with incriminating circumstances; Keene turned his chair a little and said gravely:

"Tell me the whole story, Ben. What was your mission there?"

"First, say you believe my assertion of innocence!"

"I already have said that, Ben."

"Good! Put it there! And there's no man's blood on the hand you shake, though circumstantial evidence may yet bring me to a dance on air, as it has brought much better men before me. Now, Shed, I'll tell you."

He dropped forward with his arms on his knees, and fixed his fine dark eyes on the detective's attentive face.

"Shed, this man Banks, who was not half a bad fellow, yet as weak as a dishrag when a girl was involved, had been making love to my sister Mollie; in fact, had proposed to her and had been taken under consideration."

"Well?"

"Ill, rather than well, my boy! The fact was not generally known. Mollie had made the matter her own little secret. But for ten days or more I had noticed that Banks was a stranger, and that Mollie was down in the mouth over something. So I took her alone day before yesterday, and by a dint of pumping drew the truth out of her, along with no end of tears. It seems that Banks had suddenly neglected her completely."

"Nothing more serious, Ben?"

"Oh, no, no! But, sir, I'm not that cad of a brother who stands round with his hands down, and sees his sister imposed upon," Herrick forcibly continued. "So I told Mollie to keep her mouth closed, and I'd mighty soon ascertain the meaning of this fellow's sudden indifference, and the true flavor of his intentions."

"Which was quite like you, Ben."

"Well, Shed, I'm a liar if I didn't run upon Banks in company with a girl that very evening. They were on one of the seats in Union Park, and I thought I'd best

give him rope enough to hang him. I didn't dream that I might hang myself in the bargain. I watched the two till nearly eleven o'clock, when they rose to go. He appeared to have been pleading with the girl about something, with more or less argument, and to which she finally had assented."

"I follow you, Ben."

"And I followed them, Shed! I saw the two enter the lodging house, and that no key was used. I was a little warm around the collar just then, for I didn't like the scamp's duplicity, and the girl he had with him appeared too young and innocent to be suffered to meet evil, if wrong was intended, through any double-dealing dog; and I resolved I would haul him up to the ringbolt in his own room, if I could locate it. So I slipped across the street, and with good luck or bad I saw him light the gas in his chamber and draw the window curtain."

The expression of grave interest on the face of the detective underwent no change, yet he now would have known, even had his faith been less, that he was receiving the whole truth from this man.

"Well, Shed, I delayed briefly, and then made a bolt for the lodging-house door," continued Herrick. "I had no trouble entering, which I did quietly, and then went up over the stairs like a cat over a wet lawn. And the first that Carroll Banks knew of my proximity was when I had him by the collar and began hauling him over the coals, in a way he'd have remembered to his dying day had he lived to be a hundred."

"Go on, Ben."

"Well, sir, it appeared that he had lost his head over the girl he had with him, and who looked as innocent and sweet as an angel, and had promised to marry her there and then if she'd have him. It was for that they had come there, and he had planned to go for a clergyman, which I now truly believe he meant to do. But my infernal rage so alarmed the girl that, unobserved by either of us, she slipped out and away. Possibly my exposure of the scamp's disloyalty to Mollie also wakened her fears. At all events, she slipped out of the room and dusted."

"What then?"

"I remained about ten minutes longer. It took me that long to say the whole of my little verse. Then I also departed. But Banks had the last word, I distinctly remember, which in effect was that he yet would marry the girl despite me, my sister, or my whole family! I had cooled down a bit before leaving, and, thinking I possibly had made disturbance enough, I slipped down and out as quietly as possible, nor saw a soul on the way. That is the whole story, Shed! And you can imagine my horror and dismay when I read that Carroll Banks had been murdered that very night, and that his belligerent caller, myself, was suspected of the crime. Now, for Heaven's sake, Shed, who killed that man? And how are my skirts to be cleared of suspicion?"

"When the first question is answered, the second will be, and not before," said Keene gravely. "Your position is quite as serious as you stated, Ben."

"Do you really think so?"

"I do, indeed. Only by placing the crime where it belongs can you be thoroughly exonerated. Does your sister know about and appreciate the entire situation?"

"Surely!"

"Who else?"

"Not a person save yourself."

"Then tell your sister to seal her lips, lest your life should be the forfeit. As the affair now stands, I shall make no immediate disclosure nor place you under arrest. But the time may come when I shall be forced to do both. I want your word that I may find you at your home any evening after nine o'clock, until I shall have released you from the pledge."

"You have it, Shed!"

"Now answer a few questions. Was there any liquor drunk while you were in Banks' room?"

"Not a drop! But he had poured two glasses, one probably for the girl, which she evidently had declined. He had drunk his before I entered, and I upset the other in my excitement."

"I see. Now, do you know who the girl is?"

"I haven't the slightest idea."

"Did you hear no name mentioned?"

"No, I did not."

"Did she speak?"

"I did not hear her. In fact, prior to her departure, I was doing most of the speaking. She stood with her hands clasped, looking as if she was scared half to death."

"What did she look like? Did her clothes suggest nothing? Did she look like a girl of culture? a society girl, or something less?"

"Less!" exclaimed Herrick instantly. "She had neither a look of culture, nor the poise of a society girl in such a situation. I would say she was some simple and very innocent person, possibly an upper servant."

"That helps!" said Keene quietly. "You can identify her?"

"Among a thousand."

"She must be found. Now, Ben, one or two more. Did you lock the door of the room when you left?"

"No, sir!" replied Herrick emphatically.

"Nor extinguish his gas?"

"No, sir!"

"Was there a light in his bedroom?"

"I think not. I cannot be sure, however, for the door between the rooms was closed."

"Ben," and the detective's voice fell the least fraction of a degree; "which of the two, Banks or the girl, betrayed an inclination to jump from the window?"

"Do what?" demanded Herrick, with genuine amazement.

"Jump from the window," repeated Keene quietly.

"Neither of them! I don't know at what you are driving!"

Detective Keene stared absently at the floor for a few moments, then arose and unlocked his office door.

"Possibly, I will call round to your house some evening about nine," he said indifferently; "and tell you at what I am driving. Be sure that I find you at home. I must ask you to leave me now, for I have an appointment at headquarters."

Herrick at once complied.

His face was brighter than when he came.

CHAPTER VI.

A VISIT TO POLLY MARKS.

Detective Keene closed and locked his office, and crossed Pemberton Square. The headquarters building faces the square from one end. At one side, in the angle formed, are some of the basement offices. These are occupied by

the inspectors of police. Attached over the low windows without is a long sign—Bureau of Criminal Investigation. This was Detective Keene's immediate destination.

"Is the chief in his room?" he quietly inquired of a clerk at the long desk in the general business office.

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Keene," was the response. "No, he is not at just this moment. He was called down to State Street a short time ago. I don't think he expected to remain long, however."

"I will leave him just a line on his desk."

"All right, sir."

Keene stepped into the inner office, and scribbled above his signature on a card:

"I will see you about noon, instead of at ten. There is a change of wind, of which I wish to take advantage."

It carried its own significance, and brought a curious smile to the keen, blue eyes of Chief Inspector Watts when he read it.

This occurred at about the same time the writer of it was presenting himself at the rear door of the house in which Polly Marks was employed, and asking to see the mistress. It happened that she was in the kitchen at the time, hence readily responded.

"I am one of the officers who took the testimony of your servant yesterday morning, when you so kindly aided us in that unfortunate affair over the way," Keen blandly began. "If there is no objection, I would like to visit her room with her."

Though the madam wondered at his selecting the rear door, rather than ringing at the front, there was no objection to gratifying the desired favor; and Polly Marks, rosy and smiling, for she at once recalled Keene as the one who had poured her the wine, was accordingly sent to conduct the detective to her lofty chamber.

"'Tain't put in order yet, sir," Polly began to apologize as they neared the room, but Keene smilingly interposed.

"Never mind that, my girl," he said genially. "I'm not here to see whether it is or not."

"This is the room, sir."

It was small, with a single window, then open to admit the morning air. As they crossed the threshold, Keene took the girl by the arm.

"Stand there, Polly!" he laughed softly. "I don't want you to go too near, lest you fall out."

Polly Marks flashed a sharp glance at him, but did not clearly understand him, nor guess why he restrained her.

"Not much danger of that, I think!" she exclaimed brightly.

"Let's see! Which was the window of—of his room?"

"That one, sir."

"Ah, yes. Right opposite. I rather wanted to see how far it seemed, looking from over here. Quite a little distance, isn't it?"

"It seems farther at night, sir," vouchsafed Polly innocently.

"Yet you managed to see quite plainly. I guess it's because you have such pretty bright eyes," smiled Keene, in a way that further pleased her, and diverted her by the very pleasure. "I suppose you could see plainer after the gas was lighted."

"Oh, yes, just for a minute, till he pulled down the curtain."

"But shadows show plainly on a curtain, I thought."

"Oh, yes, sir; the shadow was plain enough, but that only lasted two or three seconds," explained Polly, looking up, as if rather doubtful what all this might signify.

"Moved to one side, eh?" murmured Keene indifferently.

"Yes, sir; to the left."

"I see. Yes, it's quite a wide street, after all. By the way, did you say you saw a light in that little room where the bed is?"

"No, sir, I didn't say so. There wasn't any."

"Probably he hadn't had time to light that," said Keene absently. "I guess that's all, Polly. I just wanted to see how far it looked from over here. Are all of those houses over there lodging houses?"

"Most of 'em, sir."

"Pretty fair houses, too," commented Keene, turning to the hall. "I suppose you're friendly with most of the lodgers—I mean the young men, of course."

The girl flashed a roguish glance at his bantering eyes, then burst out laughing.

"Indeed, I am not!" she cried, "though some of 'em stare over here as if willing enough. But I'm a girl who minds her own affairs, sir."

"And that's a wise kind of a girl," laughed Keene. "Here is——"

"Oh, I don't want to be paid, sir!"

"I know that already, my girl," Keene kindly persisted, when she colored and drew away her plump, white hand. "But, you see, Polly, I really have no better use for it."

"Then I thank you, sir."

"Don't speak of it, my girl! You've been bothered enough to have earned it. I fear we never shall find the party who committed that dreadful——"

"You can go out by the front door, sir, if you'd rather!"

"Well, it don't matter to me—stay! possibly your mistress might have a word to say to me! And she's downstairs. I guess I'd better go down and out the way I came."

TO BE CONTINUED.

INDIAN BOW.

By EDWARD S. ELLIS.

During the old French War, when the colonies united with England in repelling the aggressions of France, it is stated that "his majesty, in order to have the best discipline observed by his troops in America, ordered five commissions of brigadier generals to be sent to America, and ten commissions for the colonels of foot, to be disposed of by General Abercrombie, or whoever may be commander in chief in that country, to the most worthy and deserving person, and that all the officers are to rise in rank and seniority according to their courage and merit, without the custom of purchasing that to which they are entitled."

At this time Israel Putnam was a little under forty years of age—just in the prime of life, and at the culminating point of his fame as a hunter and scout. In 1758 he was raised to the rank of major, and, joining that division of the army intended for the conquest of northern New York and its lakes, came under the immediate command of Abercrombie at Fort Edward. While the main army

was making its preparations for its grand embarkation on Lake George, and the storming of Ticonderoga, Putnam was the man of all others to watch the movement of the French, and repel any movement they might attempt.

For the purpose of watching the movements of the French at their formidable intrenchments at Ticonderoga, to penetrate so far as possible their designs, and to capture prisoners, and annoy Montcalm as much as possible, a strong scout was ordered, at least, as far south as Wood Creek and South Bay.

It need scarcely be said that Israel Putnam was given charge of this expedition. He selected sixty men, every one of whom he knew as Indian fighters, hunters, and gallant soldiers, and, at the head of these, he started for the place decided upon as their headquarters. The noted Robert Durkee, almost equal in every respect to Putnam himself, was the second in command.

To give them all additional experience in this sort of work, three were selected alternately to lead this little band of rangers. The woods at that time, over a hundred years ago, were so densely thick that a semidarkness forever reigned in their gloomy precincts. Through these they threaded their way, with the same cautious care that they followed the timid deer.

The distance thus marched, to the spot where Whitehall now stands, was a little more than fifty miles. Reaching Fort Ann, the clearing, with its small but friendly fort, presented a delightful contrast, while the pleasant little creek was revealed for several miles. A little beyond was seen Battle Hill, and in close proximity the border mountains of Lake George.

For three days not a gun was fired, and the march of the little band of rangers was like that of shadows; but a noble buck, dashing by them, was brought down by a shot from one of their unerring rifles. At this point fifteen of the company, whom Putnam thought unequal to the service, were sent back, so that the band, now numbering forty-five of the very best of border rangers, pressed on, and in due time reached Battle Rock, at the head of Lake Champlain.

This curious rock had every advantage for the formation of their primitive fortress. Being within hearing of the waterfall, the orders and noise inevitable in the preparation of the parapet would have been unnoticed by the invading enemies, while the water, at the very narrowest portion, was of sufficient depth to float the largest war frigates. The width of the water at this place is in the neighborhood of a hundred feet—less, if anything. The rock slopes down toward the water, its lower edge being seven feet above the surface, so that an enemy in passing might be said to enter the very "jaws of death," if a foe, however small, should undertake to defend the pass.

Such was the spot selected by "old Put" for the establishing of a fort, from which to hurl back the invading French army, and all will admit that no other could be equal to it in any respect. While engaged in the construction of his intrenchments, Lieutenant Durkee, with five men, was sent a few rods beyond, at the confluence of the lake with South Bay, to give timely notice of the approach of their enemies. Durkee constructed a sort of ambush, and it was understood that if they numbered no more than twenty, he and his five men were to have the privilege of disposing of them themselves without bothering the main body.

These arrangements being made, Putnam and his men set vigorously to work. Their fortress, when finished, consisted of a heavy wall of rock four feet in height, and of about the same thickness, and extending along the lake, almost to the same distance as the rock itself. This made the interior of sufficient area to give them a chance to move about freely. In front, he arranged dwarf trees, undergrowth, small pines, and moss to cover the rock, scattering leaves and small brush, and deluging the surface with dirty water, so that the eagle eye of an Indian would not have suspected that there was any ambush in such a place.

Many a time, when Putnam and some of his friends retired to a distance, and surveyed it, the perfection of its simplicity completely charmed them.

"If that isn't about the nicest foe trap I ever set," remarked Putnam, "then I'm no judge of what such a thing is."

"Yes, it will do," replied Durkee, "if them confounded French don't come up this way during the daytime, and their redskins take a squint at it."

"What if they do? They'll never suspect there's any ambush laid here."

"Maybe not, but those red dogs have sharp eyes, and see things, sometimes, that an ordinary man would take a telescope to make out."

"At any rate, we'll have a good shot at them when they do come, if there are ten thousand."

As yet it was not certain which route the French would take—this way or up the bay. Both were practicable, but there was every reason to believe that the former would be their choice. There was no doubt they would come in considerable strength, and with a goodly number of boats to carry back the plunder they were sure of securing. At that time the French knew there were enormous trains going forward, by way of Saratoga to the head of Lake George. At this very time Lord Howe was pressing forward, and occupied fully five miles of the narrow road over which it was passing.

Time always passes wearily to those in watching, and as day after day dragged slowly by, the men began to grow impatient for the coming of their enemies. Putnam now and then began to fear that they would take the other route, and thus "flank" him and leave his party behind; but, second thought, assisted by the reasoning of Lieutenant Durkee, always succeeded in convincing him that in all probability the much desired collision would very speedily take place.

On the fourth morning of their watching, their fisherman that they always kept occupied, returned with the announcement of very poor luck, and Putnam resolved on an extra dinner in the shape of venison. The woods abounded with them, but hitherto prudence had forbidden them to discharge a gun, as there was no telling how near some of the Indian scouts of Montcalm were.

Putnam knew all the paths and haunts of the deer, and was confident he could bring down a plump animal within a very short time. Sure enough; he had watched less than half an hour when a magnificent buck came trotting by within a stone's throw. The next moment he made a wild leap, ran a short distance, and then tumbled headlong to the ground.

For the sake of concealing the smoke of their fire they had built it under the falls, where they now served up

the deer, and made a dinner such as the choicest epicure might have envied.

"I tell you what, major," remarked the cautious Durkee, "I don't know about the wisdom of this thing. We have had a splendid dinner, but that rifle of yours made a crack that a Mohawk would have heard a half dozen miles away."

"Ah, Durkee, you are too timid. The noise of the falls has either drowned it, or so deadened it that no one has noticed the report. Come to think, however, I would be rather pleased if it had attracted attention. I am getting tired of waiting here, and if I only knew of anything that would hurry up the French I would do it."

"Never you fear, major; they will be along in due time, and we will have our hands full in disposing of them. When they do come it will be by hundreds."

"You speak as if you knew, lieutenant; I only hope you do, and that there'll be enough of them to pay us for building our fortress and watching so long."

Lieutenant Durkee felt so much apprehension regarding this shot of Putnam's, that at the conclusion of their meal he shouldered his gun and started on a reconnoissance up the lake. He gained several eminent positions which afforded him an extended view of the beautiful sheet of water. He saw nothing of the Indians or French, but on a distant projecting point of land he descried the faint smoke of a camp fire.

He watched this for a long time, but failed to discover any other signs of life, and finally returned with the comfortable assurance that the imprudent rifle shot—as he regarded it—had fortunately not been heard by hostile ears.

This day, like the preceding, gradually wore away without any incident worth recording. Durkee's men occupied their ambush, and kept up an unremitting watch of the lake for the first indication of the approach of the enemy. As soon as it grew dusk the lieutenant joined his men at South Bay, and it was scarcely possible that the most wily foe could come within range of this battery of lynx-eyed sentinels without being instantly detected.

The distance between Durkee and Putnam was such that they could communicate with each other by means of signals with the greatest facility. It was agreed that the call of the whippoorwill, repeated three times, with a slight interval between each, should be the signal to Putnam that the enemy were coming. To prevent misconception the call was given several times, and it was found that not only Durkee himself, but every one of his five men could give it with such remarkable exactness that the bird itself would be deceived.

As the night settled over the forest and lake it was very dark, a state of things which was unpleasant to the Americans, as it prevented them from seeing their enemies until they were close at hand, although they might detect the dip of their oars while yet at a considerable distance.

At nine o'clock, however, the clouds cleared away, and the round, bright moon revealed the shimmering surface of Lake George, for miles beyond the ambush of Durkee. Everything was more favorable than they had a right to suspect.

While the lieutenant sat watching, and a perfect silence reigned, he fancied he detected a distant and faint ripple of the water. Bending his head to make sure, he was satisfied that he was not mistaken. Looking over the lake, a moment later, he saw the enemy coming, apparently in vast numbers, their boats moving with the beautiful regularity of troops upon parade.

So resolved was Lieutenant Durkee to gather an idea of the precise number of the advancing foes that he refused to give the signal for the space of several minutes. Finally he judged them to be about a thousand strong, and then deliberately and perfectly he gave the preconcerted signal—the call of the whippoorwill, repeated thrice.

Putnam instantly replied to the signal to let Durkee know that it had been heard and understood, while the brave lieutenant, now satisfied that their course would be up the creek, instantly left the ambush with his men, and joined Putnam at the barricade to assist in the defense.

"I think they are very nigh a thousand strong, or else they have a most extraordinary number of canoes."

"You are right," replied Putnam, and turning his head so that his men might hear him, he added: "Boys, are you ready? Then ram a couple more bullets home, and don't let a whisper be heard among you."

At this moment the advance guard of the enemy were within a few yards of the mouth of the bay, and behind them came the whole fleet, all gliding so noiselessly that naught but the ripple of their paddles could be heard.

The advance guard were composed of Indians, and, as they entered the narrow pass, they halted, for there was an air of danger about the place that filled them with suspicion. At the same moment the French leader of the advance fancied he detected a noise upon shore, which gave him also a thrill of apprehension. A simultaneous halt of this part of the fleet was made, an Indian exclamation of alarm passed from boat to boat, and the paddles were withdrawn and pointed upward. They then clustered together, in fearful suspense, for they knew that they were under the cloud of danger.

The preconcerted signal was the discharge of Putnam's gun, and as it burst out upon the solemn stillness it was instantly followed by the other forty double-loaded rifles, that hurled death and destruction among the crowded enemy. The Indians and French were terror-stricken. Their canoes riddled by balls, their skippers falling on one side, some sinking, and all thrown into the greatest confusion, contrasted terribly with the profound stillness which had hitherto reigned.

The French rallied, but the surviving and terrified Indians dashed by in their canoes; but, as the braver whites maintained their position, they returned and joined them, until an order was given for them to effect a landing, at a place now known as the First Bend. This was very near the ambush which Durkee had constructed and occupied so long, and to it he and his companions slipped without being observed. Each blunderbuss was triply charged: and, as the canoes huddled together to effect a landing the same dreadfully murderous volley was hurled among them, scattering them with a greater panic, if possible, than before.

Still, the French were unquestionably brave, and they returned the fire immediately; but they were firing at a concealed foe, and their balls hurtled harmlessly against the stones and among the trees. As soon as they could reload the Americans sent another terrific volley among them, which could not be otherwise than murderous, even if they had not paused to take aim. The French, appreciating their own disadvantage, retreated a short dis-

tance, and kept up a scattering fire, until Durkee saw them making off to join the main army.

With a desperation almost incredible the French leader of the advance had maintained his position, although he had detached several parties and sent them with orders to land in other places. One of these was encountered by one of Putnam's rangers, who arrived just as a powerful Indian was running his canoe ashore, and was about to land. Five of them sprang ashore simultaneously, when the foremost was gored through by this scout's bayonet, and his comrades being equally prompt, the others were hurled back into the deep waters. They renewed the attempt with furious bravery, but were driven back again, and finally the survivors left and joined the others. The Americans instantly joined Putnam and Durkee at the main works, where it was found that only two of the patriots had been wounded. The French, knowing that the party disputing the pass was very small, continued their fire, hoping to reduce their strength and alarm them by a show of determination; but the Americans were too well protected to suffer in the least.

The enemy, becoming convinced that it was impossible to force a passage, now began a retreat in good order.

Turning to Durkee, Putnam said:

"See! they are retreating. They are close to your ambush at the mouth of the bay."

"They are off, as sure as lightning; but follow me, every one of you."

Half bending, so as to conceal their bodies among the bushes and undergrowth, the rangers speedily reached their rendezvous, from which they fired their guns with the most fatal effect, and continued it until the foe had passed beyond their range.

The loss of the French in this unfortunate affair, was two hundred and sixty-three—their whole force, according to Montcalm, who, at that time, commanded Ticonderoga, was just five hundred. Putnam had only two men wounded.

On August 8, 1758, the French forced the passage, and captured Putnam, when, it will be remembered, he was subjected to terrible torture. The French officers, after the war, stated that the horror awakened in the breasts of their men and Indians at sight of the mangled corpses of their comrades, was so great that, for a time, they could not restrain them. The place for many years after was known as "Indian Bow."

ONE RELIC SHORT.

Some time ago, when I was in the museum at Washington, a man came in with a friend of his from the country. He showed the visitor the trousers and waistcoat worn by General Washington; and the visitor, after examining them with deep interest, exclaimed:

"And so Washington really wore those identical clothes, did he? Wonderful, wonderful!"

Then the man showed him Washington's sword, and the visitor said:

"What? Is that the sword he wore in battle? The very sword that he carried with him when he crossed the Delaware, and at Valley Forge, and those places? You don't say! And that's the very—well, by George, it's great; it's tremendous. I never expected to see such a splendid old relic as that."

The man then directed his attention to Washington's camp chest, with the plates from which he used to eat, et cetera. And the stranger said:

"No! You don't mean to tell me that them's the exact plates he et off of. He didn't eat his vittals off of them very dishes, did he, and cut 'em up with that precise knife and fork? Did—did he? Well, if that ain't the most interesting thing I ever see. Makes a man feel as if those revolutionary times was real, don't it? And to think that that great and good man actually took his meals on that crockery right before my eyes! It's enough to make a feller holler."

Then the man asked him to move on to the next case, but he said:

"Ain't there any more of them relics of Washington here?"

"No, those are all."

"Not another one saved, anywhere?"

"I think not."

"Too bad. What did they do with the lie he wouldn't tell?"

Then the patriotic inquirer moved over to the next case.

WHAT A RAPID PENMAN CAN DO.

A rapid penman can write thirty words in a minute. To do this he must draw his pen through sixteen and a half feet.

In forty minutes his pen travels a furlong, and in five hours and a third, a mile. We make, on an average, sixteen curves or turns of the pen for each word written.

Writing thirty words in a minute, we must make eight curves to each second; in an hour, 28,800; in five hours, 144,000; and in 300 days, working only five hours each day, we make not less than 43,200,000 curves and turns of the pen.

The man who makes but 1,000,000 strokes of the pen a month has done nothing remarkable; there are those who make four times that number. Here we have in the aggregate a mark 800 miles long, to be traced on paper by each writer in a year. In making each letter of the ordinary alphabet, we make from three to seven strokes of the pen—on an average, three and a half to four.

THEIR FIRST AND LAST VISIT.

Two young gentlemen visited a Quaker church for the first time.

They found the church crowded, but were fortunate in being ushered to a seat near two old Quakeresses.

One of the young men, after eying the grave lady beside him, began to smile and grin at his companion.

Directly his shoulder was tapped by a gentleman, who asked him if he would not feel more comfortable in a chair which he had for him in the aisle.

The young man thought he would, and, leaving the pew, he seated himself in the chair pointed out by the gentleman.

He was immediately surprised by finding his chair raised by four men, and carried outside and placed on the front step, with the remark from one of them:

"Thee can sit there and laugh all night if thee wants to."

He sat there dumfounded until his friend came sneaking out, saying, "Bill, let's get away!" which they did, in double-quick time.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Robbers Restore Loot They Put in Treetop.

A flour sack containing $5,760 of $5,900 stolen from the State Bank of Logansport, La., has been recovered from the top of a pine tree four miles west of town. W. G. Cole placed the money there after he had parted with J. N. Johnson, the other robber, and Cole, after his arrest, drew a chart for Cashier Smith Price and a detective, by which the tree was found.

Cole neglected to tell the men that he had placed the sack in the topmost branches of the tree and because of that omission the searchers once gave up the hunt and returned to town to "sweat" the prisoners.

Cole and Johnson divided $140 when they left the bank and Johnson had $68.29 when arrested, but Cole had been to his home and had changed his clothing. It is known that he did not spend any money before he reached his home and did not have a penny when arrested, so the bank officials think they will find the $70 intact. They have, however, no hope of recovering the $15 Cole borrowed on a note he gave to the bank to send to Dallas as transportation money for Johnson to come to Logansport, La., and aid him in the robbery.

The robbery began when Price was absent from the bank for dinner. He returned to find Assistant Cashier T. T. Calhoun on his knees, with Johnson standing over him with a revolver. When Price entered Cole stopped putting money in the sack long enough to "cover" him with a revolver and to make him walk to where Johnson could guard him as well as Calhoun. Then Cole resumed sacking the money, taking everything in sight down to dimes.

Toledo Club for Cleveland.

Cleveland is to have major and minor-league baseball next summer. C. W. Somers, owner of the Cleveland and Toledo baseball clubs, announced recently that he had made arrangements to transfer the Toledo team to Cleveland to play when the Naps are on the road.

The Toledo club, under a new name, will be managed by "Jimmy" Sheckard, former outfielder of the Chicago Cub world's championship team and who all but signed to manage the Pittsburgh Federal League team.

League Park prices will be changed when the Toledo club plays there, but definite plans along that line have not been completed.

Get Estate After Fifty-seven Years.

Eli Craven, of Graettinger, Iowa, and his brother, Abijah, of Wallingford, have received checks in settlement of an estate of their grandfather, John R. Craven, who died in North Carolina in 1857. Among other things the property consisted of sixteen slaves and 314 acres of land. It has taken fifty-seven years to prove their claim.

The Champion Alligator Hunter.

Daniel Treadway is the champion alligator hunter of Louisiana and possibly of the United States. He has charge of the government lighthouse off the entrance to Bayou Lacombe, a stream emptying into Lake Pontchartrain, and whenever he can get off duty he hunts gators. Night is the best time to go after them. Treadway often invades their swamp homes armed in the most primitive manner. Paddling along in his pirogue, which resembles a canoe, he is equipped with a blunt hatchet slung to his belt and a ten-foot pole with a keen knife on one end. A bicycle lamp fastened on his head illuminates the dark recesses of the swamps and exerts a hypnotic influence on his prey.

On the night when he encountered his prize trophy Treadway was not the aggressor. A huge gator headed straight for the pirogue. Kneeling in the bottom of the craft, Treadway endeavored to focus his light in the eyes of the gator, but it kept on. The man skillfully evaded the shock, but the saurian's tail swished out of the water and sent him sprawling into the stream. Standing waist-deep in slime and water, the hunter caught the half-sunken boat and held it before him. The gator's jaws crushed one side of the pirogue into splinters. Treadway's hatchet cut a gaping wound in the reptile's head and the blood served to blind its vision. It swerved a little in its next attack and Treadway got in another blow which completely stunned his enemy. Drawing closer, the hunter selected a vulnerable spot and killed the big gator before it could recover its senses.

New York Crooks Lined Up by Law.

Reports made by the head of the New York police "clean-up" squad which is pitting the nightstick against the gangsters' guns show that in three weeks 326 revolvers and twenty-seven blackjacks were taken from thugs, and $5,000 in plunder has been recovered.

Watchful eyes, peering keenly through black masks worn by 200 detectives at police headquarters, formed a gantlet run by gunmen, pickpockets, and suspected crooks gathered in since the start of the war on New York's underworld. It was the resumption of the daily "line-up" which had been abandoned for several years, and it is believed this will further hasten the flight of the East Side's bad men.

As a side issue, detectives are making great efforts to break up opium and cocaine dens.

Take Off Coats and Save Their Lives.

Three revenue officers probably owe their lives to the fact that they hung their coats on some bushes when they began stalking a moonshiner's still in the hills near Franklin, Va. While they were destroying the still, their coats were riddled with bullets from a near-by grove. The shots came from such a distance that it is hardly probable that the moonshiners could tell the coats were empty.

Cup for Harvard Best Ball Player.

A silver cup will be given the Harvard player who does the most for this year's baseball team on the attack, it was announced recently. The trophy is the gift of Charles Hann, junior, first baseman of Harvard's 1911 team, and is to be known as the Barrett Wendell, Junior, Cup, in recognition of the services of Mr. Wendell, who played on four crimson nines that won the championship series from Yale. The cup will be awarded the man who

wins. the highest total of points for reaching first base safely, for sacrifice hits, stolen bases, and runs scored. It is planned to award a similar trophy at the end of each baseball season.

Doctor Dotes on Dime-a-day Diet.

Doctor Henry S. Tanner, of Los Angeles, Cal., who years ago gained fame by fasting for forty days, declares that the simple life is the only one for him. Doctor Tanner, who is 85 years old, is now living on ten cents a day to prove that not only is it possible to do so with comfort, but that a person's health is benefited by a fruit-and-nut diet.

Catch Wild Man in Ontario.

The authorities have succeeded in arresting a wild man who has terrorized the settlers in Western Ontario, Canada, for many weeks. He was caught as he was slipping into a shack in which he lived. Officers were compelled to fight over twenty-six miles of road in an effort to get him in the jail, and then to repeat the performance when he escaped and returned to his hut.

Wireless Lights Lamp Far Away.

It was announced in London recently that Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor, has succeeded in lighting an electric lamp by electricity through the agency of wireless at a distance of six miles. A bulb was attached to a receiver connected with an aërial receiving wire. The transmitter was linked up with a 100-horse-power apparatus, and as soon as power was applied the lamp lighted and remained lighted so long as the power was kept on.

Runaway Boy Causes Reunion.

Edwin Cabler, of Mobile, Ala., who ran away from home a few weeks ago, brought about the reunion of two brothers, E. S. Cabler, of Whistler, Ala., the boy's grandfather, and J. F Cabler, of Tangipahoa, La., who had been lost from each other for thirty-nine years. The Louisiana man saw an advertisement inquiring for the missing boy, and answered it. The youth has been forgiven.

Rains Nuts in City's Street.

Assorted nuts rained upon Pine Street, St. Louis, Mo., when firemen in the rear of a burning four-story brick building turned a hose in the 25,000-pound stock of nuts on the fourth floor. The force of the water burst burning sacks, scattering nuts over the floor and hurling them through the window into the street below.

Sheep as Grass Cutters.

Using sheep to cut the grass has been tried by the United States government along some irrigation ditches in the Salt River Valley of Arizona. It cost a great deal of money to keep the grass cleaned out. So a flock of sheep was sent to graze over these ditches and they cleared them all out. The men had very little scraping and shoveling to do in order to keep the ditches open for the water to flow through.

Our Country's Trees.

There are somewhat more than 500 recognized tree species in the United States, of which about 100 are commercially important for timber. Of the 500 recognized species, 300 are represented in the government's newly acquired Appalachian forests. All American species except a very few subtropical ones on the Florida Keys and in extreme southern Texas are to be found in one or another of the national forests.

Of the fifty-five species of oak in the United States, the white oaks and other Eastern species are the most valuable.

Yale Track Men Scarce.

Devotees of track athletics at Yale received a shock recently when only thirty-five candidates for the team reported at a meeting called by Captain Brown. This is the smallest number in years. Last season there were about 100 candidates. It is believed that the unusually large number of candidates for the crews this year has taken away many available men. Several track men of ability are also on the big baseball squad.

Finds $150 Pearl in Oyster.

When he was eating the last of a dozen raw oysters in a Poughkeepsie, N. Y., restaurant, James A. Lavery found a pearl. After paying his 60-cent check, he took the gem, a perfect specimen to a jeweler, who appraised it at $150.

Sunfish Has Queer Scales.

A gigantic sunfish which was caught off the California coast by D. H. Barton has been added to the American Museum of Natural History, at New York. In addition to being a monster of its species it was so old that on its back there were wrinkles, composed of folds of skin which had grown together, leaving the surface of the skin quite smooth. The fish was 10 feet long and 11 feet high, but was not weighed. However, it is estimated that it weighed a ton.

Will Pay for Stolen Liquor.

The court of claims, at Washington, has reported with a favorable recommendation the claim of heirs of George Boone, late of Winchester, Ky., for $2,500, for liquor taken from a tavern by Federal troops in 1863. The heirs are Henry Boone, Winchester; Cliff Boone, Kiddville, and Captain Sam M. Boone, now of Danville, late of Winchester.

Dog Draws Pay as "Cop."

Turk, a terrier, won a place on the regular city pay roll of San Bernardino, Cal., by attacking a burglar before daylight and preventing the robbery of the home of Walter Heap. It is really a promotion, for the dog has been receiving a salary of 25 cents per day as a "cop dog" since he captured a bicycle thief, four months ago.

Injured in Fourteen Places.

Robert Kistler, a lawyer, in suing the Union Traction Company, of Indianapolis, Ind., for $50,000 alleges fourteen specific injuries and declares there were others. The hurts he claims he sustained in a wreck at Yorktown are: Ribs broken, weak and nervous, aches all over body, partial loss of use of legs, pleura and lungs punctured, long and severe headaches, lower part of back injured, partial paralysis on right side, breathing and heart action affected, unable to stand mental or physical effort, nerv-

ousness due to blow over solar plexus, hearing and sight affected by blow on head, spinal cord injured by blow near shoulder blade, right hand and arm atrophied because of bruises.

Shoe Horse in Fifteen Minutes.

J. B. Price, a Harrison, Ark., blacksmith, has made what is believed to be the record in shoeing a horse. Price led the horse into his shop, took off old shoes, pared all hoofs, and fitted and placed the round of shoes, clinching and trimming the thirty-two nails in fifteen minutes, and the job satisfied his customer.

Faints at Will; Makes Money.

A man 81 years old showed the city of Ames, Iowa, a new way of appealing to charity. Ragged and famished, the old man, who said he was a war veteran, fell to the sidewalk in front of a newspaper office. He was picked up, placed in a new outfit of clothing, and given a ticket for Marshalltown. The old man did not go to Marshalltown, but he went to the college community and "collapsed" in front of half the club and fraternity houses. At each place he was given financial aid and accumulated several student dollars.

Keeps Flag Flying Forty Years.

When the Civil War ended Karl John Ryberg, a member of Company O, 198th Regiment, Pennsylvania Infantry, came to Acme, N. C., and for forty years lived in a little hovel. Each morning during that time he unfurled a small United States flag on a pole he erected on his home, and with the setting of the sun he folded the flag and took it indoors. When he died at Acme recently the flag was buried with him.

In Sleep, Girl Calls on Chum.

May Conden, 13 years old, of 295 East One Hundred and Sixty-second Street, New York, arose from her bed at 3 o'clock in the morning, put on a coat over her nightie, and went to the home of her chum, Agnes Murphy, 270 East One Hundred and Sixty-second Street. Mrs. Murphy put her to bed without awakening her.

Weds in Haste; Gets Fortune.

Six months ago Sylvanus Gray, of Durham, N. C., took a message to Miss Lulu Johnson, of Lynchburg, Va., and before he left had arranged to marry her, although neither had ever seen the other before. The marriage was kept a secret until recently when the wife became ill. The girl's uncle, who heard of the wedding a short time before he died, left an estate of $200,000 to Gray, who is a messenger boy at Durham, N. C. He is 21 years old.

Thought Dead, He Comes Home.

John J. Bishop, declared legally dead by the probate court of Shelby County, Mo., has appeared in Clarence and made claim to his share of the estate of his father, James J. Bishop, who was one of the richest men of that county. Bishop left his home twenty-two years ago and for fifteen years his relatives had believed him dead.

Prayer Cures Invalid Girl.

Prayer has cured Miss Helen May Hastings, of Delmar, Del., who has been an invalid for several years, or at least that is the only explanation given for the sudden recovery of the girl. For several years she had been unable to walk, and physicians who had operated on her spine declared she would never recover. A minister recently urged her to pray for her recovery. Now she is able to walk and move about as well as any other young woman her age.

Tall Judge Ties Knot for Couple His Size.

Nineteen feet and nine inches of humanity figured in the wedding of David M. Smith and Mary L. Hanson, winter tourists, at Mobile, Ala., from Yellow Springs, Ohio.

The bridegroom is 6 feet 5 inches. The bride is 6 feet 6 inches over all, and County Judge H. H. H. Smith, who performed the ceremony, is 6 feet 10 inches tall.

Girl's Disappointment Fatal.

Word has been received from the Michigan Northern Hospital for the Insane that Miss Alice Crawshaw, the young woman from Spencer, Mich., who was taken to that institution for treatment, died there. Miss Crawshaw, the daughter of a hotel keeper at Spencer, was engaged to be married and all arrangements were made for the wedding, when the prospective bridegroom changed his mind and refused to marry her. The young woman brooded over her disappointment until her mind became affected and she was taken to the hospital, but only lived a short time.

Foreigner Elected Alderman.

Fred A. Kochling, cigarmaker, of Keokuk, Iowa, is now a citizen of the United States. For forty-five years he has been a resident of Keokuk, and during the greater part of that time thought he was an American citizen. He was even elected alderman. When he asked for passports recently to make a trip to Germany, he found that his naturalization papers had not been made out properly. He has just been declared a bona-fide citizen.

Breaks Arms as He Boasts of Luck.

Tom Wickham, a railroad fireman, escaped in a wreck in which the engineer was killed, at Lomenta, Texas, and the day following, while sitting on the porch of his home, telling how he escaped, he fell and broke both arms. Wickham was talking to his wife about his good luck when he toppled over.

Disappears in Oregon Woods.

John A. Spaulding, of Cœur d'Alene, Idaho, who went into the Oregon woods early in December to inspect some timber land, has not been heard from, and it is believed that he has been killed. Four weeks before his disappearance he was married. He came to Cœur d'Alene a year ago from Oshkosh, Wis., where he was president of a lumber company.

Two Men Killed in Gun Battle.

Constable Tucker Cassell was wounded seriously; Marion Bass, his deputy, was shot dead, and Lou Larramore, another deputy, was injured in a fight with negroes near Americus, Ga. Edward Tyson, a negro, was shot dead by the officers.

Two men charged that negroes fired on them as they drove past a negro settlement. One of the men was Abner Greene, whose sight was destroyed last July in a fight with

a negro, William Webster. Greene telephoned to Constable Cassell of the new attack and requested the arrest of the negroes.

When Cassell and his deputies reached the settlement they were greeted with a volley.

Delivers Dinners by Mail.

Aunt Sarah Mitchell, of Durham, Me., has agreed to furnish hot dinners including chicken, plum pudding, gravy, hard sauce, cranberry sauce, mince and pumpkin pie, and vegetables, and to deliver them at the back doors by parcel post. She prepares the dinners herself. Many are watching the progress she makes.

Giant White Wolf Captured.

A white wolf, the largest ever seen in central Wyoming, measuring eight feet three inches from tip of nose to tip of tail, was captured in a trap near Dubois recently. The animal had dragged the post to which the trap was fastened a distance of two miles. He weighed 235 pounds.

Smooth-fingered, Foils Detectives.

Albert Smith, of Passaic, N. J., arrested on a burglary charge, cheated the finger-print experts of the detective department. When they sought to take his prints, for filing in the "rogues' gallery," they found Smith had used acid, making his fingers perfectly smooth.

Chop Way from Sinking Hut.

John Jones and George Bliss narrowly escaped drowning when their fish shanty broke through the thin ice and sank in Black Lake, near Holland, Mich. Jones grabbed a hatchet and smashed a hole in the roof, through which they crawled to safety.

Poison Fatal to 1,200 Sheep.

Twelve hundred sheep of a band of 2,000 on the trail from Phyolite to Rawhide, died at Millers, fifteen miles from Tonopah, Nev., by drinking cyanide solution from the mill pond of a company. The sheep will be cremated after their hides are removed. They belonged to a mining company of Springdale.

Veteran of Three Wars Dies.

While his wife was being operated on in an adjoining room for a growth on her neck, Stephen Girard Israel, veteran of the Mexican, Indian, and Civil Wars, a forty-niner, died suddenly at his home at Baltimore, Md.

Mrs. Elizabeth Israel was not told of his death until after the operation. Israel was born 86 years ago in New York.

Strange Disease Hits Town.

Nearly 1,000 residents of Grove City, Pa., are suffering from a strange malady which physicians are unable to name. The disease resembles winter cholera and is contagious. Many persons were stricken in church Sunday and were removed to their homes. Physicians are unable to identify the disease.

Pigeon Follows Girl Seven Hundred Miles.

Thirteen-year-old Marion Olram, of Goldfield, Nev., is in her new San Francisco home and so is Dizzy.

Dizzy is not a homer, but for an ordinary pigeon it has an acute traveling sense. It followed its little mistress all the 700 miles by train from Goldfield to San Francisco, and then to her home in that city. Marion kissed Dizzy good-by at Goldfield and then wept. She looked out of the car window—and there was Dizzy. She took it in, kissed it again, and tossed it out once more.

But the pigeon wouldn't go back. When the Olrams got on the ferry at Oakland, across the bay from San Francisco, Dizzy alighted on the girl's arm.

Bear, Long Hunted, is Killed.

Walter G. Storman, of Alton, Me., recently killed a big black bear which had long eluded shooters in the vicinity of Hudson, Glenburn, and Alton. Six years ago the animal escaped from a trap by gnawing his paw off. Since that time he had made frequent raids. Many scars from bullet wounds were found on him. He weighed 225 pounds.

Fans in Small Towns Know Players' Records.

The baseball fan in the little towns and in the country knows more real "dope" on the famous players than those who attend the games in the big cities, according to a man who has returned to Chicago after a tour throughout the country.

This traveler tells of how he was outtalked in a debate in a little town. In talking with a fan who had never seen a big-league ball game, the visitor mentioned that a certain batter averaged .330 last season.

"No," came the answer, "it was .332." A look into the record book showed that the man from the city was wrong. Further conversation developed the fact that the small townsman knew the batting average of every prominent player in both big leagues. No baseball writer in the country could have furnished him more information on records.

This is not an unusual case, according to those who have traveled. The big cities do not have the wisest fans.

Oil Can on Stove; Two Dead.

To melt the ice from the bottom of a gasoline can, Samuel Kirk, a wealthy farmer, of Hamola, Manitoba, Canada, placed the can on a hot stove in the kitchen. He received burns which resulted in death, his 16-year-old daughter was trapped in a room on the upper floor and perished, and several other occupants of the house were seriously injured.

Watchmen See Ghost and Resign.

During the last two months ten night watchmen at a South River cigar factory, at New Brunswick, N. J., have resigned because they have seen a ghost in the building. They declare the mysterious specter appears each night. John Fine, who was a watchman at the factory for years, is now a nervous wreck and is under a doctor's care, as a result of seeing the apparition.

Ghost of Hunter Frequents Canon.

A real ghost, which has been seen from time to time by hunters and prospectors, has appeared again to two young men, Clark and Ownby, who were riding home through Wilson Cañon, south of Williams, Ariz. The ghost appeared at the usual place, a spot where an old hunter was killed eighteen years ago by a bear.

The hunter had cornered the bear in the cañon, but the animal turned and attacked him. After emptying his

rifle without effect on the charging bear, the hunter tried to climb a tree, but was too slow and was killed. He was buried near by.

Clark and Ownby's horses became frightened as they neared the wayside grave of the hunter, about dusk. The men observed a curious figure clad in buckskin, wearing a high-crowned hat and carrying a rifle, emerge from behind a tree. The apparition was about six feet tall and had long gray hair and a beard.

They say their ghostly visitor made a full circle about them, dragging his gun over the rocks, but without horse. Coming back to its original starting point, the apparition dropped the butt of its gun to the ground, again without sound.

Then it was that the men and horses started without delay. They declare the horses trembled and started sweating as they looked at the ghost, which apparently was as plain to their eyes as to those of their riders.

Many persons have declared they have seen the same apparition while making the trip through the cañon in the dusk or at night, and consequently the Wilson road is not a popular highway.

Sits on Limb of Tree, Saws it Off.

Harry Kochenderfer has a good many trees at his place, at Ellen Chapel, Pa., and he decided he would trim them.

Taking the necessary tools for the operation, he placed a ladder against a stout limb, climbed about twenty-five feet, and got busy.

But he sawed away his support and took a header to the frozen ground. Result:

Nose fractured.

Four teeth knocked out.

Tongue almost cut in half.

Bruises all over head and body.

Kochenderfer, though in a serious condition, is expected to recover.

Lost Ring Found in Baked Potato.

Plunging a fork in a baked potato, Roderick Peel, a rancher, of San Diego, Cal., recovered, in the middle of the vegetable, a sapphire ring his wife dropped in the fields two years ago. The potato had enveloped the ring as it grew.

Glasses Cure Dog of Acting Like Crawfish.

The curious case of the boy who sees upside down is paralleled by a freak dachshund puppy, at San Diego, Cal. The dog's sense of direction and distance is reversed. When called he would back away from his master, although obviously desirous of coming to him. A scientist discovered that the canine was suffering from a hitherto unknown eye disease.

A special pair of spectacles were made for the dog, constructed so that they could not be scratched off with the paws. After becoming accustomed to the spectacles the dog became normal, though its unusual appearance causes much comment on the street.

Use of Oil Fuel Increasing.

A great increase in the use of oil fuel by the railroads and the United States navy and merchant marine service is reported. The transcontinental railroads are now using oil on many miles of line. The weight of trains over the mountain division was invariably limited to the endurance of the fireman. Shoveling coal on the large engines over these divisions is a task that few can stand up to. With the use of oil as fuel this feature was entirely removed.

The United States navy has twenty oil-burning torpedo-boat destroyers and eight battleships which burn oil as auxiliary to coal. The battleships *Nevada* and *Oklahoma* burn oil exclusively.

Starves for Three Days Behind Windmill.

Confined in a tower of a windmill, while the whirling sails cut off his only means of egress, Edwin Pike, a farmer, of Harmony, Me., was deprived of food and water for three days and nights. Pike, completely exhausted, was released only when the wind died down.

In telling his story, Pike said that several types of windmills having failed to give him satisfaction, he decided to make his own. He had finished the mill and entered the crank chamber through an entrance between two of the sails to oil the machinery when the wind arose and set the mill in action, making it impossible for him to leave without risk of serious injury. Would-be rescuers were powerless to aid him, for he had neglected to provide any means for shutting off the machinery.

For three days the breeze averaged more than thirty miles an hour, driving the mill with such velocity that communication with Pike was impossible.

Eats Evidence, but is Held.

Although he ate the documentary evidence against him while on the witness stand in full view of court attachés and spectators, according to officials, Samuel Matheson, a Seattle contractor, was bound over to the grand jury by Municipal Judge Stevenson on a charge of passing a bad check for $35.

Matheson asked to be allowed to examine the check. He was noticed holding his handkerchief to his mouth and court attachés said his jaws were busily working. Later when the prosecutor called for the check the prisoner declared he did not have it.

This Jail Looks Good to Hoboes.

Sheriff Cushman, who has charge of the county jail at Belfast, Me., is doing his best to make prison life unpleasant. The jail has held too many attractions for tramps, and it was impossible to get rid of them. Now the prisoners are being marched out each day and compelled to chop wood for eight hours. Those who work the hardest get something extra to eat at night.

Bandit Who Killed American to Die.

"Maximo Castillo and his band will be executed on sight."

General Pancho Villa thus pronounced the death sentence on the Mexican bandit who wrecked a train in the big Cumbre Tunnel and killed forty persons, including fifteen Americans. Five of the fifteen were children.

The exact number of persons aboard the train is unknown, but the searching party which penetrated the tunnel reported at least forty dead. The day before the train was wrecked twenty-two of Castillo's men were captured and executed by the revolutionists. He captured a freight train, ran it into the south side of the tunnel about 300 feet, and there set fire to it. The passenger train entered the death trap from the north. When the engi-

neer discovered what the bandit had done it was too late.

Castillo is said to be insane. He has a small following recognizing neither Huerta nor the revolutionists. He was a trusted bodyguard of Madero when the latter drove President Diaz from the country. The wrecking of the passenger train is the most cruel and murderous of his career of outlawry. General Villa has been criticized for not having crushed him long ago.

General Villa complied with the request of the American state department and sent a guard of soldiers to accompany the party, composed mostly of Americans, who went to recover the bodies of the Americans.

The wreckage was covered by five to ten feet of earth. Juan Fernandez, rear brakeman of the passenger train, who escaped to within 200 feet of the north portal when he succumbed, died in a sitting posture with a handkerchief tied about his nose and mouth in a vain endeavor to save himself from being smothered by smoke and gas. It is believed all the others who were not maimed or killed attempted to escape as did Fernandez, but were overcome one by one.

The scenes around the entrance to the tunnel were heart-rending. Scores of Mexican women and children, relatives of men who lost their lives, crowded around both portals assisting in the bringing out of bodies.

Navy Aviator Killed.

Lieutenant J. McC. Murray, of the United States Naval Aviation Corps, stationed at Pensacola, Fla., was killed instantly recently when his machine plunged 800 feet into Pensacola Bay. Murray's body was discovered shortly afterward about 100 yards from the spot where he fell.

Lieutenant Murray had been flying out over the Gulf, and was returning to the station when the accident occurred. An investigation has not revealed the cause of the accident.

The death of Lieutenant Murray is the first fatality that had occurred at the Pensacola station. Prior to coming there recently he was stationed in Annapolis. He was 30 years old.

Lieutenant Murray is the fifteenth man to lose his life while flying for the United States army, and is the second victim for the month of February. On February 9 Lieutenant Henry B. Post, of the First Aëro Corps, fell into San Diego Bay from a height of 600 feet.

Jake Stahl Out of Baseball.

Jake Stahl, when seen in Chicago recently, denied that he had been offered the management of the Brooklyn club of the Federal League.

"Nobody has talked to me about becoming a manager in the Federal League or any other baseball organization," said Mr. Stahl. "I am in the banking business now, and have no intention of going back into baseball."

President Charles Weeghman, of the Chicago Federal League club, denied that he was negotiating with Stahl as agent for the Ward brothers, of Brooklyn.

Farmer Digs Up $6,800 in Nuggets.

Finding $6,800 in gold at a time when a mortgage was about to fall due was the good fortune of Ralph Chesney, a Ford County farmer, living thirteen miles southwest of Jetmore, Kan. A pioneer merchant of Jetmore, Kan., who brought the news, says Chesney was riding over his pasture when he saw something glittering beneath a rock, and overturning the stone, found forty pounds of gold nuggets. The gold is supposed to have been buried by prospectors who were attacked by Indians while returning from the Colorado gold fields, in 1865. Only one of them escaped, it is said, and he died after reaching Pawnee Rock, where he told his story.

Eats Dog Flesh as Tuberculosis Cure.

Charles Harber, of Fort Wayne, Ind., has for the last two years been a sufferer from tuberculosis. Recently he began eating dog flesh and drinking tea made from the fat of dogs. Now he is improving, and he declares that his improvement is due to the remedy that he is using. Harber says that the remedy is an old German one, and that it has been used with success many times.

Boy Asleep Runs in Snow.

Policeman Woods, of Cranford, N. J., a little before daylight one morning recently saw a little boy running through the snow in his night clothing. The boy was in his bare feet. Woods caught him by the shoulder and shook him. The boy opened his eyes, shivered, and said: "Oh, I've been walking in my sleep again."

The policeman, learning from the boy that he was Paul, the six-year-old son of George M. Hendricks, treasurer of the Cranford Trust Company, gathered him in his arms and took him home. The banker, aroused to rescue his son, remarked that it would be the last time the boy should have pickles for supper.

Flies Over the Sierras.

Silas Christofferson arrived at Los Angeles, Cal., recently, in a biplane from Bakersfield, Cal., having flown over the Tehachapi and Coast Range Mountains, a feat never before accomplished. In crossing the Sierras, Christofferson at times went up 7,000 feet, nearly 2,000 feet above the highest peaks. He made the 170 miles in three hours and forty-five minutes.

Two Hundred Ache to Spank a Boy.

Nearly 200 able-bodied men and women gladly would have spanked one fifteen-year-old boy in Brooklyn, N. Y., recently. They were the spectators at a moving-picture show at No. 228 Fifteenth Street.

Right in the midst of the most thrilling film some one sneezed. Then some one else. More. Dozens. Scores. Everybody! Then William Mackel, the proprietor, caught Johnny Seubert, of No. 73 Sixteenth Street, blowing a brown powder from the back of his hand.

The lights went up as Johnny was caught. Mackey turned the boy over to a policeman, and he was locked in the Fifth Avenue station as a juvenile delinquent.

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